



# THE CENTURY MAGAZINE

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Fifth Series, }  
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## JACK FROST.

HA! ha! Jack Frost,  
Is the frontier crossed  
That divides us from Autumn's domain?  
Are we far on the road  
To your icy abode  
O'er the track of your wintry plain?  
Whose leafless trees  
All elbows and knees,  
All crooked, and crank, and cropt,  
Seem struck of a heap in the act of a leap,  
Surprised by your breath in a dance of death,  
And all fast glued in the gaunt attitude  
They last had chanced to adopt!

Ho! ho! Jack Frost,  
Have you rudely tossed  
To the winds our sylvan fleece?  
Bold thief of the wood  
You shall make it good  
With the folds of your snow pelisse.  
For the gold and bronze  
Of the Autumn fronds,  
Whose tints you would not spare,  
You shall pay full score of snowflakes hoar,  
Compound for the crime with glist'ning rime,  
You shall trim the meads with crystal beads,  
And crisp the morning air.

Our gable-heights  
Your stalactites  
In fringes shall festoon,  
You shall lay the lake —  
Or I much mistake —  
With a polished floor full soon;  
Each bough you stripped  
Shall be bravely 'quipped  
In a coat of sparkling cold —  
Each hedge you scour a fairy bow'r,  
Your morning breath a silver wreath,  
Your starlit night a crown of light —  
You shall pay us back fourfold!  
Temple Bar. WALTON HOOK.

## TO PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

SWEET poet, thou of whom these years that  
roll  
Must one day yet the burdened birthright  
learn,  
And by the darkness of thine eyes discern  
How piercing was the sight within thy soul;  
Gifted apart, thou goest to the great goal,  
A cloud-bound radiant spirit, strong to earn  
Light-refit, that prize for which loud myriads  
yearn  
Vainly light-blest — the seer's aureole;  
And doth thine ear, divinely dowered to catch  
All spherul sounds in thy song blest so well,  
Still hearken for my voice's slumbering spell  
With wistful love? Ah! let the Muse now  
snatch  
My wreath for thy young brows, and bend to  
watch  
Thy veiled transfiguring sense's miracle.  
D. G. ROSSETTI.

## A NOCTURNE.

## FROM THE GERMAN OF REINICK.

EARTH in heavenly rest is sleeping,  
Moon and stars their watch are keeping  
Where a garden, bright with flowers,  
Slumbers through the midnight hours.  
Good-night!

There, with moonbeams shining o'er it,  
Stands a cottage, and before it,  
On a leafy linden spray,  
Sings a bird its tender lay.

Good-night! Good night!

In her bower the maid lies dreaming  
Of the flowers around her gleaming,  
Heaven's own peace within her breast,  
Angels, watching, guard her rest!

Good-night! Good-night!

Cassell's Magazine. A. L. MACKECHNIE.

## MARCH MEADOWS.

A THICK white mist lies heavy on the vale —  
Heavy, and soft, and cold; on either hand,  
Ghosts of themselves, the trees and hedges  
stand,  
Nor black nor green, but vaguely dull and  
pale;  
And in the clotted air, our lambs' weak wail  
Is stifled; and a silent spectral band  
Of cattle moves across the shadowless land,  
Wherein all forms are blurr'd, all voices fail.

Ah me, how like is this our stern sad spring  
To life's yet sterner autumn! Such a mist,  
So cold, so formless, from the Lethe-  
stream

Rises and spreads, and blots out everything  
That we have keenly loved and warmly  
kiss'd;

Till we too are but figures in a dream.  
Academy. M.

## ONLY A WEEK!

ONLY a week, since you and I  
Just "kept each other company;"  
Ah! sweet old phrase of every day,  
Such as we use in earnest play,  
Touching the heart-strings tenderly.

Now, sullen looks the stranger sky  
On the slow hours that weary by;  
How long since we two wooed delay?  
Only a week!

Could any graceful subtlety  
The past's sweet careless magic try  
To teach the present to essay  
The joy that went with you away?  
That asked to be, to live, to die —  
Only a week!

All The Year Round.

From The Fortnightly Review.  
THE PRESENT POSITION OF EUROPEAN  
POLITICS.

### PART III.

#### RUSSIA.

IN two previous articles it has been shown how Germany and Austria from the fear of a Franco-Russian alliance, how England from preference for peace and want of sufficient motive, and how France from the real peacefulness of the majority of its electors, are unlikely to begin a war. There remains Russia, the country which, intensely patriotic but not yet very sure of its position in the world, ridiculed as barbarous, and therefore very sensitive, and ruled by an autocrat of uncertain temper, is alone in a position to provoke a conflict. Will it do so?

There appeared lately in a number of Russian newspapers some remarkable articles on the same question on which I am writing here — the present position of the great powers. These articles, indeed, teach us nothing except the arrogance, or the consciousness of strength, of Russia, which scarcely seems to care what other powers may or may not do, and the extraordinary ignorance which prevails among even the best-informed real Russians in the empire. I say real Russians, because there are at St. Petersburg a number of able and highly cultured persons who are in the Russian service, and have no illusions upon the subject, but are either not of Russian race or are so much in touch with foreigners through constant travel or long residence abroad that they have ceased to share the more dangerous among the illusions of their countrymen. Unfortunately, however, it is the Russian emperor who governs Russia, and not these gentlemen. Some of them, as for example M. de Giers, Jomini, and Vlangaly, are occasionally consulted by way of form, but their private opinions do not receive official sanction or become that policy of the Russian Empire which in public (and most conversations at St. Petersburg may be looked upon as public) they defend. To justify what I have said about articles in the Russian journals, let me quote the doctrines of one from the *Novoe Vremya* upon "The Western Pow-

ers and Russia." The phrase "the western powers" does not apply only to Great Britain and France, the meaning which it used to bear, but it includes five powers, or what we style the two central and the two western powers, with the addition of Italy. The writer states that if Prussia has managed to make an apparent German unity towards the exterior, it must be remembered both that German Austria is not yet included within Germany, and that there is no internal unity even among the kingdoms that are included. South and Catholic Germany, he declares, detests Prussian and Protestant Germany more than ever, and the southern States will seize the first opportunity to throw off the hegemony of Prussia, and once more make Austria supreme in the German Empire. Schleswig-Holstein too is a serious weakness to the empire. Germany is hated by Austria as well as by France, she suffers internally from socialism, she has alienated Great Britain by her colonial policy, and she could not even depend on Italian friendship unless she were willing to help Italy to take away from Austria the Tyrol, the Trentino, and Trieste itself, and this she will not do. Germany therefore is absolutely isolated. The emperor and Prince Bismarck himself will die before German unity has made a step, and the only chance they have of maintaining themselves lies in a Russian alliance. A somewhat flattering picture this, indeed, of what Prince Bismarck has done for Germany! The writer passes on to Austria. Austria desires to regain leadership in Germany, she refuses to become a Slav power and insists on remaining German, she is waiting only for the death of Prince Bismarck, but is too wretchedly weak to harm Russia. Turning to France, the writer points out that she has quarrelled with England and stands alone, whilst his glance at England, as might be expected, reveals to him the impossibility of her defending either her colonies or her trade, the danger that she incurs from Ireland, and the certainty that she will put up with anything rather than fight. The conclusion of the article, of course, is that Russia alone among the powers is quiet, strong, and really great, that if she gave

to Germany her alliance she could wipe out Austria from the face of Europe, and force France to remain at peace. If, on the other hand, she chooses a French alliance she can destroy Germany, whilst the destinies of England are in her hands, inasmuch as she could easily deliver India from the British yoke. The writer thinks it laughable to suppose that Russia will ask the consent of any power to settle the Bulgarian question in the sense which she may prefer. It is hardly necessary to indicate the weak points of this article, and I shall have occasion to deal with the strong points, and to reveal the grain of truth that it may contain, in demonstrating the immense power of the Russian Empire. That with which I am here concerned is only to show in what a fools' paradise those Russians live who really direct the external policy of their country — the emperor himself and the leading journalists, who, however, it must be observed, are themselves powerless, except through the immense influence of one of them, the autocrat of the *Moscow Gazette*.

I am aware that much that I say in the course of this article will produce protest, for while I shall offend those who believe in the moderation or truth of Russia, I shall, on the other hand, displease those too patriotic persons, if there be such a thing as an overdose of patriotism, who dislike Russia so much that they cannot recognize either her power or the patriotism of her people. All that I shall try to do in this, as in the other articles of this series, is to ascertain facts, and the exact bearing of the facts with which we have to deal. I address myself to those, if there be such in these days, who are free from party prejudice, from prejudice personal and national — to those, in short, who try to see things as they really are.

The fact upon which it is necessary to insist in considering the position of Russia is that she has of all the European powers by far the largest homogeneous population. There are about as many Great Russians, speaking the same language, without any dialects, as there are real Germans in all Germany. In addition to these there are millions upon millions of closely connected Russians

of other Russian tribes, of which the fourteen millions of Little Russians are the most numerous and the best known, furnishing as they do the picked men of the Russian Guards. Some careless observers are apt to make seriously an exactly opposite statement, namely, that there is such a diversity of races under the Russian flag that Russia must be bound but loosely together, and be always at the point of tumbling to pieces. No doubt there are great numbers of picturesque peoples of various races, tongues, customs, and religions who are under the Russian rule. Travellers affect their provinces, and are rather repelled by the uniform black dullness of Russia proper; but all those peoples bear to the mass of the Russians only about the same numerical and political importance as the sotnias of Persian, Armenian, Georgian, Mingrelian, Circassian, Bashkir, and Uralian Cossacks, who figure in the emperor's body guard at a great review at St. Petersburg, bear numerical and military importance to the fifty or sixty thousand men of the guards who are upon the field. No doubt the Fins of Great Finland and the Samoyeds of northern Siberia, and the Sarts of central Asia, and the yellow-faced and slit-eyed Kalmucks of Astrakhan, the Golden-Horde Tatars of Kazan, the Turcomen of the Caspian steppes, the Indians of Baku, the Tchuvassi, Vatikis, Mordwas, and other Asiatic Fins upon the Volga, and countless other tribes and peoples who might be named, differ very greatly the one from the other, and all of them from the Russians; but on the whole they do not form a weakness to the Russian Empire, and their existence within its confines does not detract from the essential fact that there are some sixty millions of Russians who speak virtually one tongue.

This nation, numerically the superior of any nation except the Chinese, and China is not yet organized for modern war, is also more religious and more patriotic as a body than is any of the other great powers of Europe. The accuracy of this remark will be contested, but hardly I think by those who know Russia well. The Russians are as religious at the least as are the people of the English colonies

or of the United States, and they are as patriotic as the citizens of the latter country. In the union of patriotism and of religion they present, I know no country in Europe which can approach them, although they may be rivalled by the people of the United States. We have here obviously, from the facts which I take to be admitted by careful observers, in Russia a power which, by the very nature of things and apart from any movement which she may make, is formidable in the highest degree. There are some fossil politicians in England who still think that Russia is weakened by the existence of a Poland. Poland died in 1863, and died forever. The men who, either in their own persons or in the persons of their ancestors, have illustrated literature by their genius, and countless battle-fields by their splendid courage, may refuse to recognize the extinction of their country; but the Poles, considered as an anti-Russian force, were an aristocracy, in the best as well as in the common sense of the word. The Polish peasantry, though often led by them against Russia, were never anti-Russian to an unpurchasable degree, and a large portion of the Polish peasantry have now become as attached, through agrarian legislation, to the Russian Empire as the German peasantry of Alsace were to France by the agrarian legislation of the Revolution. At the time of the Crimean War Poland did not rise; but looking to what afterwards happened in 1863, it is impossible to say that it might not have been roused. Poland could now no longer be raised against the Russians; and in spite of the fairly successful attempts which have been made by Austria to conciliate the Galician Poles, there are Slavonic subjects of Austria who could far more easily be raised against the dual monarchy than any Polish or other Slavonic subjects of Russia could be raised against the tsar. It is difficult for us to realize the attraction of Russia for some of the weaker members of the Slavonic races. Where, as once in Serbia and lately in Bulgaria, Russia has had a comparatively free hand, she has often alienated Slavonic feeling; but where Slavs have been the subjects of another great

power, and especially where they are subjects of Hungary and Austria, Russia is to them a friend on whose power they build their hopes. The Ruthenians of the dual monarchy are so many Russians lost within its boundaries. There is no similar German or other colony lost in Russia, for what aliens there are are too few and too much dispersed. Some think that Russia is weakened by the German element in the Baltic provinces. Here, again, those who think so are behind the times. The Baltic provinces were never German, so far as the peasantry are concerned. A German aristocracy, with German traders in the towns, ruled over a peasantry of the Esthonian, Lettish, and Lithuanian races. To this peasantry the Russians, with all their despotic measures against the landowners and against the German tongue, have come as deliverers. Because Russia is very violent in her language and in her acts, we too often fail to see how a peasantry which an aristocratic government or a government of political economists could never win, is won over by her to her rule. The Moscow men failed in Bulgaria, but in Poland they succeeded, and in the Baltic provinces, too, their methods and their policy have not been found wanting, and it is probable that the problems that have so long perplexed this country in her relations with Ireland would have been solved in a week by Samarin, or Miliutin, or Prince Tcherkassky.

Some are disposed to think that Nihilism constitutes a great danger to the Russian Empire, weakening not only her offensive but even her defensive force. There can be no doubt that in Russia, in spite of the recent so-called cadet and staff conspiracy, the general belief of the best informed is that at this moment Austria and Germany have more to fear from socialism than Russia has from Nihilistic conspiracies. I shall have to return to the subject generally when I come to my Austrian paper; but as regards Russia I may say that my latest information leads me to agree with Russian writers upon this point.

There can be no doubt, I think, in the mind of any reasonable observer, as to the



real and lasting strength of Russia; and the question which it is more interesting to consider is in what manner that strength is likely to be used. Russia is, though old in some senses, politically as young a country as the United States, and has not yet by any means passed the growing period. She is strong even while growing fast, but will be still stronger in her prime. In considering her power let me, in the first place, protest against the action of those Englishmen who allow themselves to be scared out of a policy which a short time ago they thought right and wise. The fact that a number of gentlemen have come to realize the strength of Russia has led them to begin to declare that they were quite wrong a few years ago in saying that this country ought to keep Russia out of the Balkan Peninsula and away from Constantinople, and out of Herat and away from the Persian Gulf; and that on the contrary England should embrace her with open arms and enter upon an alliance with the power which a short time ago they were declaring to be their country's mortal foe. No doubt it is impossible to maintain the principles of Lord Beaconsfield's speeches of 1878; and it is really a useless waste of time to examine how completely the so-called settlement of that year has broken down. All that has happened was prophesied by clear-sighted observers at the time. Sir Samuel Baker then stated that our policy "might terminate in a friendship between the Russians and the Turks to the detriment of British interests and to the confusion of the assumed protectorate." He was alluding to the Asia Minor Convention and the appointment of military consuls throughout the Turkish Asiatic provinces, and his prophecy has come true to the letter. In 1878 we were told that England had restored to Turkey the greater portion of her provinces, but eastern Roumelia was counted into what was restored, and Bosnia and Herzegovina were not counted into what was taken away, so that the inquiry need hardly be pursued. We were told that our action had not only restored her provinces to Turkey, but had insured the reform of their administration. No one I suppose can imagine that much progress has been made in that direction. We were told that Turkey had been given in the Balkans an impregnable frontier; that the power, military and civil, of the sultan in eastern Roumelia was complete, and that it was "absolutely necessary for securing the safety of Constantinople." All these considerations, however, were

thoroughly examined at the time, and the only extraordinary thing is that, even by a portion of the public, and even for a few months, they should have been believed. The whole fabric of our policy in 1878 having sunk in collapse, we are now told by some of the same persons who were instrumental in misleading us on that occasion that Bulgaria is not a British interest, that Constantinople is not a British interest, that the continued existence of the Turkish Empire is not a British interest, and generally, that nothing is a British interest which our own military unreadiness would make it difficult for us to protect by force of arms. Just as a large portion of the public refused to accept the guidance of these gentlemen in 1878, so it is possible that a portion of the public will refuse to accept their guidance now, and will insist on examining the question for themselves. When we all but went to war in 1878 for the sultan's supremacy in eastern Roumelia, and were told that we had secured it, we soon found that we had only secured it upon paper, and we were then assured that the idea must be replaced by another. British policy, we were asked to believe, had shifted, because circumstances had shifted, and the spirit of freedom found to exist in the Bulgarian race, and especially in eastern Roumelia, was to form the new bulwark against Russia—a bulwark better than the Balkan line. But as soon as Austria declined our alliance, and Russia refused to make terms with the Bulgarians, then our instructors began to tell us that even Bulgarian independence was not a British interest, and it seems now to be generally understood that Constantinople itself is not to be defended by this country, unless Hungarian feeling should make Austria fight, and unless a scratch pack of other allies can also be obtained. Just as in the Belgian question, which I discussed in the first article of this series, and to which I shall return in the last, it is desirable that England at all events should know what she means and make up her mind, so too in this question of the Balkans and of Constantinople. Not that the question is likely to be raised at present in an aggravated form. The sultan, knowing that he is now deserted by the most influential men in both the English parties, and that Austria will not fight for him if she can help it, because she knows that she is not a match for Russia in a military sense, expecting also, at he does, a rising in Crete, a Greek advance upon Janina, and a rising in southern Macedonia whenever

he is attacked, is forced to make terms with Russia, which practically means that his empire is to last his time. This habit of trying to make things last their time is common with the pashas. A Turkish plenipotentiary once said to a representative of one of the great powers, "Why cannot the Greeks and Bulgarians keep quiet a little? They will get all the territory they want some day." Practically, the sultan is forced to sit still whilst his empire crumbles. He is only at this moment asked to let—and he cannot prevent it—Russian influence come a little nearer; nothing really under his rule is for the moment to be taken from him; and he can persuade himself that after all he will be no worse off in any point than he was as early as 1879, when the eastern Roumelian part of the Treaty of Berlin was seen to be a dead letter. There is nothing new in the friendship of Russia and Turkey. Russian troops held garrison in Constantinople when it was menaced by the Egyptians under Mehemet Ali, and the two countries worked cordially together under the auspices of "Mahmoudoff" in the winter of 1879-80. The Russians have been slow upon their way. Baron Blumberg, as long ago as 1684, called Turkey that "body condemned to death, which must very speedily turn to a corpse;" but the corpse is not yet laid out. The Russian advance, however, though slow, is sure. From time to time she makes one long step further towards her goal.

At the time of "peace with honor," Lord Beaconsfield, speaking of the danger of Russia gaining "such a prize as Constantinople"—such was the language of the instructions which he received, curiously enough, from Mr., now Lord, Cross,—puzzled the protocolists by alliteratively styling it "the capture of Constantinople." We shall have presently to consider the chances and the probable results of a struggle between Austria and Russia, and also of a struggle between England and Russia; but it must, I think, be recognized that neither France nor Germany shares the view that the "capture of Constantinople" by Russia is any danger to the world. In order to estimate the probabilities of a contest we shall have briefly to consider the internal condition of Russia, and to compare it in some degree with that of Austria, which will be further investigated in the next article of the series.

I spoke just now of Russia as being, above all, a patriotic country. France is a patriotic country. Frenchmen are pa-

triot, from M. Grévy down to M. Drumont; but probably neither M. Grévy nor even M. Drumont possesses that kind of patriotic courage which would lead him to get himself quietly killed for his country's sake if he could well help it. The Russians have a different sort of patriotism from the patriotism of other European peoples—there are few Russians who would hesitate to die if their death could help their country's cause. Possibly this may be a mark of barbarism; some pale-faced philosophers, I have no doubt, may think it so; but it is a factor in the present position of the European world.

Poland and the Baltic provinces and Nihilism may not be sources of weakness worth counting; Russia's real weakness is the absence, inevitable under an autocracy such as hers, of a trained upper and middle class. The sharp contrast between the simple piety of the Russian peasant, which makes of every meal a celebration of a sacrament, and his occasional outbursts of drunkenness and violence, is excelled by one still sharper between the piety of the peasants and the profound scepticism of the upper classes. I do not speak of religious scepticism alone, but of that practical scepticism which thinks nothing worth doing well for any cause, and which while in Russia it is consistent with the use of patriotic language, and perhaps with the existence of certain patriotic sentiments, makes of the class which is undermined by it a feeble instrument for the purposes of the Russian fatherland.

I said in the first article of this series that in Russia there are only two men who count—but the second whom I named counts in a double way, both as an individual of ability and as the editor of a newspaper, which, in a sense, may be described as the most powerful in the world, because it is all-powerful or nearly all-powerful in one great empire.

The Russian press is only powerful through Katkoff's power. The official and semi-official papers say only what might be expected of them, and, as a rule, do but mark time. The *Moscow Gazette*, which asserts that there is no free press in the world except the Russian, enjoys a freedom which is, however, personal to itself or to its great editor. In constitutional countries, it declares, the whole press is enslaved by party. The *Moscow Gazette* knows no party, for Russia knows none that are worthy (or unworthy) of the name. It succeeds in doing what it pleases in Russian home affairs; but although in

foreign affairs its anti-German sentiments are contradicted by *Le Nord* and do not prevail, at all events it is allowed to utter them.

Katkov counts as Katkov, and counts also as the mouthpiece of the Moscow, or national party, which may better be styled the Moscow group. This party is composed of a knot of men, who may have their differences, but who to the outside world appear to hold opinions which are identical, because they are identical as against the outside world. Those whom I have named before — Aksakoff, Samarin, Miliutin, and Tcherkassky, — belong to a past generation, and now represent Moscow in the Elysian fields. Prince Vassiltchikoff, and others who could be named, have continued their traditions, but whether in the Conservative shade of the *Moscow Gazette* or in more Liberal journals, the expression of Moscow or national opinion has always been substantially the same in questions which concern the outer world. We talk of the Moscow party, but one great strength of Russia lies in the fact, which I repeat, that it has no parties. Russians nearly all agree, with the exception of those whose hand is against everything — agree, that is, in a large number of general views which are almost peculiar to Russia. Even the Nihilists and all other Russians are at one upon some points, as, for example, in ridiculing Parliamentary government. The dominant note with all is confidence in the future of Russia, and a pure protective affection for the Slav races outside the empire, provided they will look up to Russia, take their policy from Russia, and profess the orthodox religion. The late emperor was affected and controlled by Moscow opinion, but the present emperor shares it, which is a very different thing. The present emperor is as national as was Peter the Great; but, unfortunately, he hardly shows Peter the Great's ability. In a family where all the members have been made by absolute power unlike other men, he resembles rather, in the type of mind, Paul and Nicholas than Alexander the First or Alexander the Second. Both the Alexanders were melancholy Germans as contrasted with the present obstinate and thoroughly Russian tsar. In spite of the fact that he was trained by men who knew Russia well, I fear that, like the traditional Irishman, he might remark with truth that he himself knows nothing of his own country and still less of any other. Those who surround, and mainly advise him, are strongly conservative in tone.

Pobedonostchieff, Count Tolstoi, and Katkov are men who are accused by the reformers of being the somewhat pretentious exponents of an ignorant old Tory obscurantism, but to a foreign observer there is not much difference between a Russian Liberal and a Russian Conservative. In the English sense of the word, Liberalism is somewhat out of place in Russia. Parliamentaryism, so dear to us, will probably never be fully adopted there, and it must be admitted that Russian patriotism holds it not so much in aversion as in contempt.

The one great weakness of Russia, the absence of a really trained middle or upper class, is intensified by a kind of proscription, which is a result of autocracy. Half those men of ability that the country does possess are shut out of office because they, not being in the least able to help themselves, used to bow somewhat low before the lady who since the death of Alexander II. has been in foreign countries styled his widow; to whom, indeed, the imperial family themselves, also because they could not help it, used to bow rather low in the late emperor's lifetime. This proscription is in itself a consequence of the obstinacy of the tsar, who likes to be served by submissive or by pliant men, but who in spite of his liking for pliancy does not himself know how to forgive. M. de Giers, as one of his colleagues once told an Englishman, who knew him well, "stands at 'Attention,' one thumb on the seam of his trousers and the other at his cap, and says (the minister was speaking in French), 'Oui, sire; oui, sire.'"

When we talk of "spread-eagleism" we are generally thinking of the United States, but the real spread-eagleism is that, not of the American republic, but of the Russian Empire. The Russians habitually talk of the time when they will be masters of the whole world, and if, instead of writing of the facts of our time, I were tempted to prophecy concerning the next century I should have to admit that, if we exclude America and Australia and confine our thoughts to the Old World alone, it is at least conceivable that their dreams should one day come true. The only foreigner who is known to the Russian peasantry is the German, and the name for German and for foreigner with the peasantry is the same, and the hatred of the "dumb men," as they call their German neighbors, is intense. The peasantry know little of the English, and if you listen to their sentiments you discover that it is their belief that one day there

will be between them and Germany a war compared with which, their soldiers say, that of 1870 will be child's play, and that if Germany wins this will not be the end, but that war after war will follow until Germany is destroyed. This feeling is to some extent held in check by the Russian court, although one day they may take it up and use it; but court dislikes are turned for the present less towards Germany than towards Austria. We will consider presently the military strength of Russia as compared with that of her great neighbors. Russia, in spite of her enormous debt and its tremendous annual charge, is growing in power, and that power, great in itself, gains by being surrounded by the terrors that encompass the unknown. She has by far the largest army in the world, and, with a complete mobilization of her forces, has upon paper a force at once of four and ultimately of six millions of men. Some are inclined to think that the men will not be found when wanted, but great progress has been made by Russia since 1878. Her artillery has as many guns as that of Germany or of France, her cavalry is perhaps more numerous than that of France and Germany together, certainly more numerous than that of Germany and Austria combined. This cavalry force is admittedly the best there is for that service to which cavalry in modern war is limited, if it is not to be destroyed on use. With moderate prudence the resources of Russia cannot but grow and grow, for Russia from many points of view is a young country, and Siberia, territorially considered, is almost another United States. With her magnificent natural position, and with her unrivalled chain of fortresses upon the German frontier, Russia can always wear out German patience. It may be true, as Count Moltke says, that two hundred thousand men upon the Vistula, along with the German fortresses, might prevent Russia from invading Germany; but even in that case there would be two hundred thousand men withdrawn from the French frontier in face of a French army more numerous than the German, and they would not suffice to prevent Russia from crushing Austria or holding Austria in check. It is a curious commentary upon the repeated protestations of affection which have passed between the emperors of Germany and of Russia during the last few years, that since 1870 Königsberg has been converted into an entrenched camp upon an enormous scale, that the forts of Thorn have

been iron-plated and topped with iron turrets, that Dantzic has been greatly strengthened, that Posen has been greatly strengthened, and that Cüstrin is being strengthened now, as is also Glogau. Russia, growing daily in military strength, sets in the scale against the Germans more than Austria can bring to restore their equilibrium. It may be confidently asserted that it is now far too late for Germany to strike her possible enemies one at a time. For Germany to attack either France or Russia now would be madness if not suicide, and Germany will go on with her declarations of friendliness towards Russia although with a perfect willingness to see coalitions formed against the northern power. Prince Bismarck has one immense advantage in dealing with the Russians, this, namely, that he is face to face with the worst-informed of European powers. The Russian emperor has some of the best-trained men in Europe at his back if he would use them, but they are retiring from business or growing old. One of them is not what he was when minister in China; another is not what he was when he settled certain private difficulties in the imperial family, which needed more tact and even wisdom for their settlement than do the affairs of nations. In the concerns of the powers blunders are repaired by the simple process of casting swords into the scale, and the most solid of arguments after all is based upon the adding together the troops and fortresses of allies, and deducting the troops and fortresses of the enemy. This simple plan of dealing with affairs of state is inapplicable to the affairs of courts, but Baron Jomini has an hereditary understanding of the one class of considerations, and an inborn power over the other, which make of this Vaudois-Swiss *bourgeois* of Valangin the best foreign servant that wears the livery of the Slav, whose very tongue he cannot speak. But he is old, and set aside for clerks and sergeants. Prince Lobanoff, who is a really great diplomatist, is allowed no power. Were I to say how great, I should fear to be read by M. Katkoff, or by M. de Giers, and to do the ambassador hurt by causing his patriotism to be suspected. M. Zinovieff, of the Foreign Office, is also a good man and also has no real power.

Prince Bismarck, I repeat, is to be congratulated upon having to hold his own against the worst-informed of the powers. Austria could not exist at all, if she were not well-informed; with all her mixed nationalities, and with her servants of many

tongues, she is well-informed, as if by the law of her being; and Germany is well-informed, because it is her business to be well-informed, and she does all her business well; but Russia and France are by far the worst-informed of all the powers. The Russian emperor now reads nothing, whatever he may have read when only tsarevitch, and rejecting the advice of the men of ideas, who are suspected of the deadly sin of "Europeanism" or "Westernism," is advised by those who are mere sergeants by obedience and by discipline, and by the old Tory bureaucrats and pedants. Russia need only be pointed out as a country in which every foreign newspaper is tabooed. France, I am sorry to say, though she allows foreign newspapers to enter freely enough in all conscience, is, for practical purposes, almost as ignorant. M. John Lemoine may know, the *Temps* may know, M. Spuller may know, M. de Freycinet may know, but France as a country does not know, and the electors and the assembly are vain enough to suppose that they know better for themselves by natural lights than they could be taught by those who have been trained to teach or govern.

So greatly is the instability of governments in France displeasing to Russia, that there have been dreams of late of bringing about an arrangement for a lasting peace by a revival of the Three Emperors' League and the complete isolation of the French. This is possible rather than probable. In order that Russia should cease to menace Germany and Austria with France, it is necessary that Russia should be completely contented in all parts of the world, and it is difficult to see how Austria can willingly be a party to contenting her. There is no great love lost between the English Conservative Cabinet and the Bulgarian government. The most prominent member of the English Tory party would count it a cheap way of pacifying Europe, if peace could be aided by the isolation of France, through letting Russia work her will in the Balkan neighborhood. Lord Randolph Churchill was one of the steadiest foes of Lord Beaconsfield's foreign policy in 1877-8. On the other hand Lord Salisbury is not a man to throw away the possibility of a good alliance, or to leave Austria in the lurch, and he keenly sees the possibility of making an anti-Russian policy in the Balkans popular by using the popularity of the Roumanians and the Bulgarians. Moreover, there is an argument by which an anti-Russian policy in the Balkans can

be recommended and which appeals to John Bull with peculiar strength. It is the breeches' pocket argument. Every country annexed or virtually annexed by Russia is closed forever to our trade by means of heavily protective duties, although, as I have shown in the case of Bosnia, I fear that I must admit that the same is very nearly true of our Austrian allies.

Russia is really, it may be seen by what has been said, working her will on Bulgaria by Prince Bismarck's help. Austria is hardly strong enough to resist. She is terrified at the prospect of a war with only an English alliance. She expects Prince Bismarck to back her policy at St. Petersburg, and he himself is not strong enough to do so. From time to time the Russian emperor pretends friendship with France, or at all events shows France in the background, in the way in which a Fowler "shows a dog" to drive wild fowl here and there. There is not and there will not be a Russo-French alliance in advance of war, if then, but France is necessarily always ready.

The less decided of the opponents in England of Russia's Bulgarian policy (for it has in England not one single friend), extenuate it by a comparison with British action against Arabi in Egypt. Now, granting that Arabi represented Egyptian feeling as much as the Sobranje represents Bulgarian, an assumption which the British government would deny, and putting out of sight the fact that the organized government of Egypt was in part destroyed by Arabi, whereas in Bulgaria the regents have taken charge, by consent of the last prince, of the organized government of the country, — yet, even so, no fair comparison is possible. An English Kaulbars has yet to be discovered. In going to Egypt England did not act alone. The ultimate action taken was the consequence of the joint note, and the joint note was proposed to the English Cabinet in 1881 by France; France moreover agreed to take part in the expedition, and would have done so had her Chamber been willing to vote the funds. When France refused to go, England applied to Italy, and Italy all but consented. England, in fact, moved with the unofficial approval of most of the powers, whilst all the powers, without exception, officially congratulated her on her success in restoring order in the country. From the moment when Great Britain, through Lord Salisbury, saved the prince of Bulgaria at the Constantinople Conference it became certain that



Russia would ultimately dethrone him. He was dethroned accordingly, but merely to dethrone was not sufficient to restore the Russian prestige in Bulgaria, and further steps were necessary. Prince Alexander had done nothing against the tsar of late, and nothing at all that has been proved, though I am aware of much that has been asserted. He had even been, perhaps, unduly submissive. But he had been independent, and Bulgarian independence, whether in tongue, in religion, or in the sphere of foreign affairs, is intolerable to Russian patriots. I am one of those who are unwillingly driven into a position of hostility to Russia, for I have much sympathy with the aspirations of the Slav race in general, and even with those of the Russian people in particular. Strongly anti-Russian as I am, there are, as has already been seen in this article, many points upon which I have the highest possible opinion of the Russians; but I must admit that the outrage to Europe of the Kaulbars mission, after the circumstances of Prince Alexander's deposition, is tremendous, and I fear irretrievable. It is a death-blow to the smaller States, and the proclamation or consecration of the doctrine that might in the affairs of nations makes right. The Russian press is now openly claiming Bulgaria as virtually a province of Russia; its concerns are a matter of internal policy with which the powers have nothing to do; and resistance to orders from St. Petersburg is the same thing in Bulgaria as in Poland. Whether or no the Russian policy has been wicked, it certainly seems to have been foolish from the Russian point of view. There can be no doubt that the Bulgarians are alienated from Russia by that policy. They adored Russia, or rather the figure of the late emperor, before the Russians came, but they were alienated very soon. The governor of Bulgaria during the Russian advance, the leader of the Moscow party himself, wrote during the war to one who was once the friend of himself and Samarin, and of both the Miliutins and both the Vassiltchikoffs, that the Bulgarians would not commit what he called the folly of the Poles, but would resemble the Ruthenians of Galicia in welcoming the Slavonic headship of Russia. Now the Russians had this advantage in Bulgaria, that there was practically no religious difficulty. No doubt there was a good deal of Protestant conversion; the English Quakers are loved by the Bulgarians for the quiet good that they have done within that country, and there is

much American Protestant influence, which has spread, through Dr. Washburn's people, from Robert College; but, generally speaking, all Bulgaria is orthodox. At the same time it is democratic, and those who welcomed the Russian liberator did so with a strong belief that their local independence would be preserved to them. The Bulgarians, according to the majority of ethnographic writers, are not of Slavonic race, but I will at once admit that this matters little. They are as completely Slavized as the Slavs of old Prussia have become Germanized. If Prince Bismarck himself, like Justinian and Belisarius, is a Slav by race, he is as German in fact as Justinian and Belisarius were Roman. The Bulgarians undoubtedly came from what is now the heart of Russia, and had their empire upon the Volga, from which they take their name; but although when they came in the fifth century they were not Slavs, by the eighth or ninth century they were almost as completely Slavized as they are now. On the other hand the Russian governor of Bulgaria, and his young men from Moscow, who came with him failed to understand that the Bulgarians had not risen against the Turkish rule for the purpose of substituting one sort of pashas for another. They gloried in the marvellous strength of Russian patriotism and the Russian desire for extension and for increase of strength, but they did not want them exerted at their own expense. The Russians, on the other side, feel that Bulgaria is now, from some points of view, so close to Moscow that absolutism in Russia is at stake if Liberalism is to prevail within Bulgaria. Russia is a country without a Liberal party. The old-fashioned Tories there are weak, and the empire ought to please Lord Randolph Churchill, for, being without Liberals and almost without old-fashioned Tories, it is a sort of paradise for a Tory-Democrat. The descendants of the Dekabrists are dead; the old Anglomaniacs and aristocratic Liberals are dead; and all the Russian politicians of the day belong to the Moscow national school, although some of them affect a Tory and some of them a pseudo-Liberal strain. I call it pseudo-Liberal when I remember their policy in the occupied provinces during the Turkish war, when they insisted that all opinion should be orthodox, and that all opinion should be subject to the emperor's will. It was always certain that Russia could not easily absorb a Catholic population, and it was always doubtful if she could ever hope to

absorb an orthodox population belonging to the Hellenic branch of the Eastern Church, but the Bulgarians were not supposed to be endowed with so much love of independence and power of resistance that they were likely to stand out against Russia. By doing so they have embarked, however, in a hopeless struggle in which the sympathy that is bestowed upon them is hardly likely to find expression in action.

There are some persons in England, haters of Russia, who believe that the Bulgarians have nothing to do but to hold out some time, and that Russia will fall to pieces of herself or undergo some remarkable change. But even a great disaster in foreign war, which alone would upset the established order there, would not in overturning it make much difference in external questions of this kind. Men point to the assassination of the late emperor, or the acquittal by a St. Petersburg jury of officials and nobles of the assassins of the grand police master, Count Trepoff, but the stone-throwing spirit, the self-depreciation of the capital, and the occasional outbursts of violent Nihilism are only the natural results of the autocratic system. Like Malet's conspiracy before the campaign of France, they reveal weakness, but their existence is not inconsistent with that of a widespread patriotic feeling, or of the power to make patriotic sacrifice.

Cold comfort, I fear, all this for the Bulgarians and for the weaker generally in the Balkan States and in the world outside; and yet the Bulgarians have deserved better things of us. By their wise and prudent policy, and by the self-restraint which has been exercised by the whole people, they have on the one hand held their own, and on the other, made an armed occupation difficult. Their spirit of independence was well known, but the ability which they have displayed in war and in finance was somewhat of a surprise. Russia believed that the withdrawal of the Russian officers would disorganize them, and immediately afterwards they were successful in a very serious war. Through all the provocations of the Kaulbars mission, and in the total absence of a supreme direction of their affairs, although under a monarchic system, perfect order has never ceased to reign, nor the taxes to come in with regularity. Verily, the Bulgarians deserve the thanks of all free men in Europe. It used to be said by Russian officers that the road to Constantinople lay through Vienna, but it now

seems as though there were a still greater difficulty in Russia's way in the unconquerable spirit of independence of the Roumanians, the Bulgarians, and the southern Slavs. Every attempt at coercion only makes them more permanently hostile to autocratic rule, and when the opposite policy is pursued and they are left to themselves, they do not appear to repent at all. The possession of such remarkable qualities of self-government by these small peoples has led many to try of late to force to the front in practical politics that which has long been one of the favorite dreams of political speculation. It may be considered to be the policy of the more liberal elements in English Conservatism and of the more prudent amongst English Liberals, to set up, if there is a possibility of doing so, some kind of Balkan confederation. If, indeed, a Balkan confederation, even with the support of Austria and of England, would not in a military sense be strong enough to hold its own against Russia, nevertheless, in any time that may be left to us, before Russia once again presses on, it may be possible to bring about, if not confederation, at all events a cordial understanding. Certainly the Greeks, the Roumanians, the Bulgarians, and the Serbs are young peoples, worth helping to defend. One of the difficulties in the way of producing anything like settlement in the Balkan question, or, let us say, in the European branch of the Eastern question, has been the existence of mutual jealousies or even hatreds. The Greeks dislike the Austrians, partly because the Austrians were supposed to intend some day to go to Salonica, and so to cut greater Greece in half, partly because the Austrians were the protectors of Servia, and the Servians claim some part of Macedonia and Albania, which the Greeks expected rather to come to their share. On the other hand, although both the Greeks and the Bulgarians were at various times somewhat pro-Russian and anti-Austrian, there was the most violent hatred between these two races, because Bulgaria had been promised in the Treaty of San Stefano many districts which are claimed as Hellenic by Greece; and because, in short, both peoples had, as indeed they still have, a longing for the same parts of Macedonia.

A confederation in the Balkan provinces must mean the confederation of Greece, Bulgaria, Servia, and Roumania, of which Roumania, Greece, and Servia almost equally dislike Bulgaria. Such an arrangement seemed at first sight to resemble a

confederation between three not very friendly cats and an altogether hostile dog. The difficulties are still very great, but they are not so great as they were, for the dislikes are now distinctly less accentuated. King Milan has even privately suggested a personal union between Servia and Bulgaria, thus raising questions which I will discuss in the next article of this series. Bulgaria, too, has appointed a diplomatic agent at Athens. Unless Hungary, with her anti-Russian policy, should prevent it, Austria would still look with disfavor upon a Balkan confederation of the smaller powers, and would be inclined to join with Russia to prevent her own permanent exclusion from the Mediterranean coast, to which she does not at present desire to go, but from which she does not wish to be entirely shut off. By our action at Berlin we cut the southern Slavs in half by planting Austria between Servia and Montenegro, an arrangement which does not seem likely to be permanent. The Austrian difficulty is, perhaps, the greatest difficulty which now remains in the way of confederation, and it is no difficulty in the way of the formation of a Balkan confederacy under Austrian headship. There is another incident, beside the one just named, which shows that the relations of Greece to Bulgaria are better than they were. An arrangement had been concluded between M. Tricoupis and the Bulgarian government, before the deposition of Prince Alexander, for the delimitation on a map of the respective spheres of influence of Greece and Bulgaria in Macedonia. This dividing the skin of the beast before he is dead, which is as a rule imprudent, is perhaps necessary in the case of Turkey, to prevent those conflicts of interest, occasionally threatening even armed struggle in the field, which break out from time to time between the Greeks, the Servians, and the Bulgarians. Unredeemed Roumania is chiefly Austrian, and therefore we hear little about the completion of the unity of the Roumanian people, although, curiously enough, the majority of the Roumanian people live outside Roumania, but the other three principal States of the Balkan peninsula are bitterly at enmity among themselves about Macedonia — Servians arrayed against Bulgarians, and Greeks against both. The troubles in Macedonia which were expected by Lord Salisbury in January last came, however, from none of these, but from Russia as he believed. The delimitation of the sphere of influence which had been arranged of course meant

an agreement in advance whether Bulgaria or Greece should conduct insurrections in particular villages whenever Turkey was *in extremis*, and which should annex them whenever Turkey was extinct. There would not be much desire, it appears, on the part of Greece to hurry matters if once she had a clear agreement upon this point. The present Greek prime minister, at all events, would be content that Greece should wait for any number of years, provided that this question were not to be settled against her in the interval. Greece asks, of course, for that Janina which was promised her by the powers and which is one of the chief cities of her people. She believes that Albania will gravitate towards her, although she is apprehensive both of Austrian and of Italian ambition in that quarter; but the point to which she attaches the most importance is delimitation in Macedonia, and then she will be content to wait a century if need be, for, as one of her chief statesmen lately said, "A hundred years is nothing in the life of the Greek nation." Apparently the Greek dream of Constantinople is dead; at all events it is no longer put into words.

As Balkan confederation is not likely for many years to come, or is not likely soon enough to be of effective value to stay the approach of Russia to Constantinople, we have to admit that if Russia is to be kept out of the Macedonian plain, Austria, with or without alliances, must bar her advance. Unfortunately Austria is not strong enough. As Austrians and Russians have not been tried the one against the other, it is impossible accurately to gauge quality, but roughly speaking it may be said that putting quality on one side the Russian army ought to be equal to the armies of Germany and Austria combined. The Russian annual contingent of the regular peace army has risen to two hundred and twenty-seven thousand men, which is only slightly under those of Austria and Germany together. The Russian peace army is nominally in the present year eight hundred and forty thousand men, but, really, if we take into account the Cossacks permanently embodied, it amounts to eight hundred and ninety thousand men, whilst even the smaller figure exceeds the peace armies of Austria and Germany combined. The total force of trained men which ought to be easily and rapidly mobilized by Russia, considering the figures of her contingents and the character of her military system, is about four million as against two mil-

lion for Germany, and twelve hundred and fifty thousand for Austria. More slowly, if she has guns for them—and guns if not in stock could probably be pretty easily obtained—Russia could place six millions of men in the field. The power of Russia to realize in fact the promise of her paper figures has recently been denied, but the necessity of taking into account the Russian military movement which began after the failures of 1878 has not been sufficiently kept in mind.

If we were to credit the figures given by the German government to the German Parliament in January last, we should believe that these results were secured by Russia at a cost exceeding the annual charge of the united army budgets of Germany and of Austria, for the official German figures give 785,906,259 marks for Russia. But Prince Bismarck deceives the German Parliament by estimating the rouble at three shillings when it is worth less than two. It is the Russian "gold" or "metallic" rouble that is worth a little over three shillings of our money. The "silver" rouble is the paper rouble, now worth but twenty-one pence three farthings. Colonel Rau, Marga, and most, if not all, of the authorities, except the Intelligence Department book, have made the same mistake, and reckon the rouble at from 3.75 francs to 3.50 francs. On the other hand, there is a large extraordinary military expenditure in Russia which it is not easy to find in the Russian budget, as, for example, a large part of the expenditure upon the Transcaspien Railway now being rapidly constructed by General Annenkoff, and calls are made upon both the village communities and the provincial Zemstvos for matters which in other countries would be at the charge of the State. In any case, however, the figure given by the German government as 785,906,259 marks, is the figure of the Russian budget which should have been stated at 495,428,078 marks only (at the rate at which the rouble then stood; now less)—a pretty considerable deception practised towards the German people. Men are cheap in Russia.

By whatever test we take, excepting quality, which has not yet been employed, Russia ought to be from two and a half to three times as strong as Austria. The Russian trained cavalry is even stronger in proportion than are her numbers generally. It outnumbers the trained cavalry of Germany and of Austria together, and is sometimes even said to be more than three times as numerous as that of the

dual monarchy, although Austria-Hungary is strong in cavalry, and has almost as large a cavalry force as France.

It may be assumed that Germany will not only give no cause of offence to her tremendous neighbor, but will try to avoid being compromised by Austria or by England. If she had ever to intervene as against Russia she would try to do so when Russia was already weakened by a long struggle. There are no very probable causes of war between Russia and Germany, except indeed the intensely bitter feeling between the two peoples, for Germany has ceased to concern herself with the Russification of the so-called German provinces of Russia, and is herself engaged in the similar policy of Germanizing Prussian Poland. Russia is well protected by fortresses against a possible German advance whilst she might be engaged elsewhere, especially by the Polish quadrilateral, in which, of Mödlin, Demblin, and Terespol, the last-named is familiar to us now as Brest-Litovsk, but the others are hardly recognizable at all under their new names. Russia has lately taken to the Japanese system of frequently changing the names of cities, just as the town council of Paris changes those of streets. Towards Austria Russia has till lately had virtually no fortresses, and the difference is instructive, for Austria is far more likely to be her enemy than Germany. Lutzk, now to be called Michaïlograd, and Dubno, old places of arms, are to be re-fortified, and there is a talk of an entrenched camp, but substantially the Russian frontier towards Austria is an open one, where, instead of fortresses, Russia has troops, especially a numerous cavalry. And yet it is on this frontier that she expects to have to fight. The meaning of this absence of fortresses upon one frontier and of their presence upon the other is, that in a war with Austria Russia expects to act on the offensive, assisted by a Ruthenian insurrection in Galicia; and so she no more fortifies her frontiers against Austria than she fortifies them against Turkey. On the other hand, it may be noted that she fortifies her frontier towards Germany, so as to be able quietly to attack Austria at her will. Russia proudly refuses to fortify her capital, a fact which would be significant of her consciousness of strength, were it not that Vienna also is virtually an open town, for the fortifications were stopped owing to the objections of the town council in 1867. The probabilities are that, in the event of a war with Austria, Russia would be able

to enter Galicia, along an open frontier of more than six hundred miles, and take Przemyśl, and Lemberg, and Cracow, in spite of the fortifications now being pressed forward with feverish haste. Looking to the nature of the Polish climate it is to be hoped that it will not be discovered when spring comes that snow-works form the bulk of the new fortifications. The disposition of the Russian railways alone is sufficient to show plainly that she means to take the offensive. She has special reasons for occupying Galicia. She would be glad enough to keep it, because it is at the present time a gathering-place for disaffected Poles. She would easily gain popularity there, by giving to the peasantry the lands of the Polish nobles, and thus could raise the Ruthenians. Galicia forms the road towards Vienna, where the Eastern question is to be settled. In the vast plains of Galicia two hundred thousand Russian cavalry would find a splendid field for war, and there they would be able to carry out against Austria those wonderful manœuvres of the new dragoons with horse artillery, which the foreign officers, in 1886, were not allowed to see. The Russian manœuvres of 1886 were conducted by forces of forty thousand men at Krasnoe Selo (for the edification of the foreign officers), and of one hundred and sixty-two thousand men, of whom nearly twenty thousand were cavalry, with five hundred and twenty-eight guns, between Wilna and Warsaw. Germany does not put two hundred and two thousand men with six hundred and fifty guns in the field at the annual autumn manœuvres. Austria is miserably equipped with fortresses and is trying in haste to repair her deficiencies in this respect.

Austria in a Galicia war with Russia would have no special advantage that I can see, save one, that, namely, of being able to raise a splendid but not very large fighting body of aristocratic Poles from other lands to serve against the hereditary enemy of their race on behalf of the least unpopular of the three partitioning powers. No doubt Germany, without actually appearing to move, would quietly collect troops on the Polish frontier and watch Russia, but it is doubtful whether she would be able to detain a very large force of Russian troops in Poland proper, except militia and garrison battalions. She could not prevent the loss of Galicia to Austria, though she might interfere to prevent the ultimate destruction of Austria as a power. A partial dismemberment of Austria, by

a Russian annexation of Galicia, Germany might not very much regret, because Austria in Galicia protects the Poles, a course which is a permanent slur upon the action of Germany in this matter. But a further or really considerable dismemberment of Austria Germany could not permit, unless under downright fear of France. I have assumed that Italy would possibly not have the will, and that England and the small Balkan States, even if not divided amongst themselves or partly neutral, would not have the power to give effective assistance to Austria in the field. Italy would be to her a more useful friend than England or the Balkan States. I have already said, in a previous article, that Italy would not save Austria gratis; but it is not improbable that she might save or try to save her for a price, and although a curious fact, it is a fact, that Vienna is more likely to be saved from a temporary Russian occupation by Italy than by Germany. Russia is anxious to weaken, and if she cannot really weaken, then, to hamper Italy, and is not unacquainted with the origin of the recent attacks upon Mas-sowah, a fact which the French press denies, but of which the Russian newspapers boast. It is certain that Italy regards the Russian policy in the Balkan peninsula as iniquitous, as harmful to European interests generally, and as hurtful to Italian interests in particular, and that Italy would join a group of powers to oppose it by force. If opposition by force is impossible, owing to the weakness or the fears of Austria, or even to the buying off of Austria by Russia, then Italy would join England in putting on the drag as much as possible. Whatever may be the feeling in Hungary, it must be admitted that Austria will put up with a good deal from Russia rather than fight. She has done so in the past; and to give a single example of humiliation out of many, I need only mention how at various times and on various questions she had to remonstrate with the Bulgarian government in the days of the "Russian ministers" in Bulgaria, and received from the latter replies couched in terms of gross and intentional discourtesy.

I have assumed that England would be unable rapidly to assist Austria in the field. In such a war our part, if we were drawn in, would probably be the same as in a single-handed war against the Russians, namely, to defend India in central Asia, to try to raise China against Russia, and to adopt the policy of exhausting Russia by a very strong attack on Vladi-



vostock; but if Italy were with us, it is probable that we should be tempted by the possession of a formidable allied fleet to attack Russia in the Black Sea—an enterprise in which we should undoubtedly fail. The Russians expect to be attacked in the Black Sea, but a careful examination of the character of that sea, as well as of the Baltic, shows that not by the strength of her fleets, but by the natural strength of her position Russia is in those directions virtually impregnable. There are some who think that the Mahometan population of the Caucasus might still be made use of against Russia, but this view is as obsolete a superstition as the belief in Poland. The Russian colonists of the Caucasus have now become Cossacks for military purposes, and Russia has no more patriotic people than the Black Sea and the Caucasian Cossacks. Those who think that while India could defend itself upon the Helmund the troops from England, with a Turkish army—if the Turkish alliance were obtained—should be thrown into the Caucasus in order to prevent the despatch of troops by the Caspian towards Herat, are proposing a course which the highest authorities reject.

Colonel Malleon is the chief exponent of the view which I wish to combat. I know not which, indeed, it is that he proposes—a landing at Anapa and march on Stavropol, or a landing at Poti and march on Tiflis. In the latter case we should be destroyed by fever, and in the former crushed by Russian numbers. Colonel Malleon seems to think that the Caucasus has not long been Russian. Stavropol and its district have been Russian since the seventeenth century, and Tiflis since 1801. It is the Circassian highlands which alone held out against the Russians, and into them we cannot penetrate. Or does he wish us to repeat Hobart's 1877 experiment of a Soukhoum Kali landing? This is mere map-maker's warfare. From Soukhoum Kali we could go nowhere, and our spies when sent into the mountain valleys would discover that the Circassians are gone and replaced by Kouban Cossacks. But even during the Crimean war the Caucasus did not rise, though Schamyl was in his home. The Jingo plan appears to be to march on Tiflis in winter, but the Vladikavkas military road, which I know well myself, is perfectly passable in winter for Russian troops, and even the "Géographie Militaire," which asserts that it is sometimes blocked by ice, admits that the interruption of com-

munications does not average more than seventeen days a year. I cannot agree in the Yate or Malleon proposals, and feel that there is indeed no arguing with gentlemen who believe that we can make use of Persians against Russian troops.

Whilst the Austrian military position, in spite of the desire of the emperor for military reform, is still weak, I cannot find words too strong to praise the political ability with which the Austrian Empire is being kept at peace and kept together. The Austrian Empire is a marvel of equilibrium. The old simile of a house of cards is exactly applicable to its situation, and just as in the exercises of acrobats, when seven or nine men are borne by one upon his shoulders, it is rather skill than strength which sustains them; so if we look to the Austrian constitution, which we shall have to consider in the next paper in this series, it is a miracle how the fabric stands at all. At the same time it is impossible for Austria, although she can maintain her stability in times of peace, to impose upon either her Russian or her German neighbors as to her strength for war. Prince Bismarck is obliged, with whatever words of public and private praise for the speeches of the Austrian and Hungarian statesmen, to add the French and Russian forces together upon his fingers, and to deduct from them the Austrian and the German, with doubts as to the attitude of Italy, doubts as to the attitude of England, and contemptuous certainty as to the attitude of Turkey. If Austria could have presented Prince Bismarck not only with an English alliance, but with an English, Turkish, and Italian alliance, he might possibly have allowed her to provoke a general war; but with the difficulties attendant upon a concession of territory to Italy, except in the last resort, and with Turkey at the feet of Russia, it was difficult for Prince Bismarck to go further than to say for Austria, "Fight by all means, if you feel yourself strong enough to beat Russia single-handed. France and Germany will 'see all fair,' and you can hardly expect anybody effectually to help you." Prince Bismarck deals with foreign affairs on the principles upon which they were dealt with by King Henry VIII. of England, when that king was pitted against the acutest intellects of the Empire and of France. His policy is a plain and simple policy, and not a policy of astuteness and cunning, and almost necessarily at the present time consists in counting heads.

A good deal of indignation has been

lately wasted in England upon the Turk. The Turk may be frightened by Russian pressure from the Caucasus, a territory which, instead of being a military weakness to Russia, as the ill-informed suppose, is in fact a splendid base for offensive operations; or the Turk may be bribed by the promise of getting Bosnia back; but in reality his position is a very painful one, for he is weak, and he would be between the hammer and the anvil whichever side he took, and would suffer about equally either way. No one who knows the present state of the Turkish Empire can suppose that Turkey could effectively deal with a Russian attack by Erzeroum and an insurrection in Macedonia, not to speak of a rising in Crete and a permanent revolution in Arabia. The efforts of the last war have left Turkey terribly weak; and although in the course of a few months, if they were given to us, we could collect and ourselves arm and equip a Turkish army which would prove a formidable force, the time would not be given to us, and long before anything could be done Macedonia would be in flames and Asia Minor would be overrun.

Bosnia attracts the sultan most. It is usual to say that his first consideration is for his fears, but his Majesty has a temper, too, and the loss of Bosnia is laid to Lord Salisbury's account, and Lord Salisbury has never been forgiven. The sultan has always maintained, to his intimates, that he was led to assent to the Asia Minor convention under false pretences, because he had not been told that England was going to propose at Berlin that Bosnia should go to Austria, an alienation of his territory which the Russians had not suggested in the Treaty of San Stefano. He says he had not been told that the territory was to be taken, and that still less would it have occurred to him that the proposition was to be made by England to the powers. It is a curious fact that by giving Bosnia to Austria England offended equally the Slavs and the Turks. Russia reassures the sultan as to the probability of war, and for the present reassures him with some truth. In spite of the stories which have lately gone the round of the European press as to Russian mobilization on the frontier of Roumania, it is probable that Russia will no longer pursue the policy of tearing off bits of Turkey, in order to set up small States which forthwith turn against her, but will support Turkey's life-interest in that property which she regards as her

own in reversion. As I pointed out in the second article of this series, the sultan may become a dependent, like the emir of Bokhara. The Russians at this moment desire most a friendly Turkey, which will keep England out of the Black Sea in time of war. I grant to Colonel Malletson that the Russians themselves think that we could harm them in the Caucasus and keep them out of Asia Minor by cutting their maritime supply-line across the Black Sea. The day to which they look forward, in which they could prevent our sending our troops to Kurachee by the Suez Canal, in a war in which France was not with them, and by their advances in Asia could prevent our making the Euphrates road, lies further in the future.

We have now to consider the direct bearing upon English policy of the subjects which have come before us in this article. England is free from engagements; for that to Turkey as regards the Armenian frontier, is conditional, and the condition has never been fulfilled. We are free to select our alliances as we please. But we are so little prepared for war that no power thinks our alliance worth having for a short war, and it is the first days of a war that count at the present time. Making a virtue of necessity, there are many in England who begin no longer to regard Constantinople as a British interest of the first magnitude, although they still talk of joining Austria for the purpose of defending the independence of the Balkan States. The Turk's disappearance, they say, should be as gradual as possible, in order to give time to the Christian States to consolidate their interests and form a confederacy. Bulgaria would have gone to Russia of herself, they think, as Servia has gone a long way towards Austria, if the Russians had not foolishly alienated, by their autocratic fashions, the affections of the Bulgarian people; but as they have done so we should take advantage of the sentiment, and while we should allow Russia to work her will upon Asiatic Turkey, we should protect the young States of the Balkans.

Now Russia could reach Constantinople through Asia, not so directly, but more surely and more safely than through Europe. There is this additional danger to England in her going by way of Asia, that she does not interfere with Austria, and that, on the other hand, she does interfere with the canal route through Egypt. If Russia were once to establish herself in Palestine she could easily reach the Suez Canal by land, and although the dis-

tances are great, if we look to what has been accomplished by Russia in the Caucasus, towards Persia, in central Asia, and towards China, in the last hundred years, we shall not feel that in the days of telegraphy and railroads such an advance is in the least impossible. By whatever route the Russians go, there are certain obvious drawbacks to this country attendant upon their possession of Constantinople. The military value of the Suez Canal, as I have shown before, may easily be exaggerated, and so may the importance, therefore, to us of our power of passage in time of general war through the Mediterranean. But there is one loss by a Russian occupation of the remainder of the Turkish dominions which no British government would willingly face. It is the loss of trade. In the Asiatic provinces acquired by Russia at the end of the last Turkish war, where there used to be a considerable British trade, there is now none, for it has been killed by protective duties. Russia at Constantinople would mean our exclusion from the Black Sea trade, except the wheat trade out of Russia. Our commercial interests in Asia Minor are very large, and they are absolutely jeopardized by a further Russian advance. There are many who declare that they would be willing to bring about an Anglo-Russian alliance upon the terms of giving Russia her head in the direction of Constantinople, on the understanding that our north-western Indian frontier should be secured and our temporary hold on Egypt regularized and made permanent. It is pointed out that the emperor can have no great love for an alliance with French republicans and ex-friends of Poland against his great-uncle and the military monarchies of central Europe; and that what this new policy on our part would mean would be the adoption by us, under stress of circumstances, of the Russian policy advocated by the emperor Nicholas to Sir Hamilton Seymour. In the present state of parties in England, where the pure Conservatives are unable to obtain a clear majority, and where the Liberals are supposed to have more or less pro-Russian sympathies, the opinions of Lord Randolph Churchill become of special interest, and he is supposed to incline in the direction which has just been indicated. He used to hold that Lord Beaconsfield's policy of 1878 was a mischievous and foolish policy. He was opposed at the time of the Berlin Treaty to any attempt to reconstruct the Turkish Empire. He always ridiculed the pre-

dominance on the Conservative side of the doctrine of the integrity and independence of the Turkish Empire; and, in short, he thought that in the days of Jingoism the English Conservative party had gone mad. There can be no doubt that the old-fashioned ideas of English policy in the East are at a discount; and although I do not myself agree in the novel views which have lately been put forward with regard to the possession by Russia of Constantinople, it is impossible to deny that they have been stated with much ability and by journals of great influence, and that they have weight with an increasing section of the public. Moreover, the English electors have a natural and a growing dislike to war. On the other hand, I am inclined to think that a policy which would risk the loss of a trade which is almost exclusively English, namely, the foreign trade of Asia Minor, is not likely to be popular in the manufacturing centres of the north of England. There are other points which should be considered. If the Black Sea can be forced by our fleet, or entered through the permission of Turkey acting as our ally, the Russians in any future war with England will have to keep in the Caucasus a vast force which would otherwise be available for service in Afghanistan and Persia. This would be the case even though I should be right in my belief that we could not succeed in harming Russia in the Caucasus; she certainly must and would guard against the danger. The possession by Russia of a magnificent military and naval base within the Dardanelles would destroy our present power of using the Suez Canal, even in a war with Russia in which France was neutral, and would also make of the pick of the maritime Greeks, who are now our friends, her servants. Russia once at Constantinople, our future hold on India must be by the Cape route alone, and it is a long way round by the Cape to the points where we shall have to fight for India—the Helmund and the Persian Gulf.

The causes of difficulty between this country and Russia are worth examination, and those which have nothing to do with the continued existence of the Turkish Empire or with the possession of Constantinople are very numerous. One standing difficulty between Russia and all Liberal countries concerns the extradition of political offenders. The question has been very useful to Prince Bismarck in the past, because he has always tried to give full satisfaction to the Russian feel-

ings upon this point, a satisfaction which never could be fully given by any other country. For many years this question prevented all chance of a Russo-French alliance, and maintained a close friendship between Germany and Russia; and were Nihilistic outrages to revive, the question once more would become acute, although it is slumbering at the present time. As regards ourselves, our laws have always been an enigma to Russian emperors since the days of Matveief's creditors and Whitworth's special embassy. After 1848 the whole of the European powers united in making representations to us with regard to the proceedings of the foreign refugees, and from 1851 up to Mazzini's death, repeated representations, often menacing, were addressed to us with regard to supposed incitements to assassination. The fall of Palmerston on the Conspiracy to Murder Bill was not encouraging to future ministers with regard to interfering with the right of asylum, and no more was the verdict of "not guilty" returned by the jury in the case of Dr. Bernard and the Orsini attempt to assassinate the emperor of the French. The Russian government in the last few years has made repeated applications to the governments of France and England for protection against Nihilist conspirators who made Paris or London their residence, but the English government has turned a deaf ear to the requests made for legislation.

A subject which has done more to separate the countries than the refusal to modify our law upon the subject of the extradition of political offenders has been the recent Russian action with regard to Batoum, and the confirmation given by that action to the English belief that Russia will never be bound by promises, however solemn. Those who pretend that Russia's declaration with regard to Batoum was really a spontaneous act can never have read the protocols of the Berlin Congress. The latter portion of Lord Beaconsfield's speech upon p. 208 of the English blue-book, and the speeches upon the same and next page of the representatives of Germany, Austro-Hungary, France, Italy, and Turkey, show that the whole of Europe took the view that Russia had promised, rather than break up the Congress, to maintain Batoum as what Lord Beaconsfield called "a commercial port for all nations" by "the transformation . . . of a disputed fortress into a free port." It is really idle for any friends of Russia to argue that a formal engagement

has not been broken, indeed it is almost an insult to our intelligence that they should do so, and in the interest of Russia herself it would be wiser for them to admit that Russia has violated a binding declaration, only the more binding in honor because it professed to be voluntary in its nature.

Similar bad faith has been shown from time to time by the Russians in central Asia, and has exasperated English feeling. The first of the marked instances of the disregard by Russia of her own assurances to us concerned, oddly enough, the occupation of Herat by Persia, an occupation which forty years later an English Conservative government themselves proposed. The deceitful conduct of Count Simonich was imitated in the disregard of Prince Gortschakoff's assurances to Lord Clarendon in 1869 as to the evacuation of Samarkand, in the violation of the promises made to Lord Granville as to the Khivan expedition, in the disregard of the memorandum communicated to Lord Derby in 1875 as to advance beyond the then frontier of the Attrek, and in the disregard of the repeated assurances with regard to Merv. The story of the successive steps by which Persia has been made to quit the Turkoman desert and has come more and more under Russian influence will never be fully known, but we have learned at least one fact, that it is not prudent for England to enter upon a game of secret treaties. In 1878 the proposals made to Persia to occupy Herat were at once made known to Russia, whereas the secret articles by which the territory down to Sarakhs was ceded by Persia to Russia were never made known to us. The fact is that Persia does not believe that we both can and will support her against Russia, and Turkey has now only become another Persia in this respect. Afghanistan, which was going the same way, has been secured by a direct guarantee of her frontiers, a fact which is not encouraging to those politicians who object to entanglements of the kind.

Another cause of difference between Russia and Great Britain lies in the unsettled condition of the Afghan frontier question, which has for a long time made little progress. The boundary between the Heri-Rud and the Oxus has not yet been settled, and that on the upper Oxus is altogether in dispute, while Russia is giving trouble to the ameer by intrigue at Balkh and throughout Badakshan. The feeling in Russia against England is

strong, but not of extreme strength. It is nothing like so strong as the popular feeling in Russia against the Germans. It is not so strong as the permanent aversion entertained in France towards the English. Still as regards the armies and the upper classes of both countries, there can be no doubt about the mutual feeling. The national badge of Russia and of England is the George and dragon, for St. George is a national saint of both the countries, but in Russia for the last fifty years the dragon has meant England, and in England for the last fifty years the dragon has meant Russia. As regards the military situation between the countries, its dangers are both exaggerated and imperfectly appreciated here. The very same people will often be found to think that we could easily, if we would, act upon the terms of the Anglo-Turkish convention and keep the Russians out of Turkish Asia Minor, that we could defend Constantinople, harry the Russians in the Baltic and the Black Sea and the White Sea, and yet that Russia could invade India without much difficulty. It may be confidently asserted that they are wrong upon both these heads. England unassisted cannot keep Russia out of Turkey, she cannot get at her in Europe, but on the other hand she may feel assured that Russia is equally unable effectively to attack her in her Asiatic empire at the present time. It must be admitted that in the race for Herat Russia has undoubtedly beaten us, and that therefore we must contemplate the possibility of the ultimate occupation of Herat by Russia. But as she came on towards India from Herat the tables would be turned. She would be further and further away from the country where her government was established or where the people were friendly to her rule, and she would plunge into defiles inhabited by hostile populations.

It is a serious responsibility for a writer who is not a soldier to undertake to pronounce a confident opinion of this kind, for it is a point upon which the ablest and best-instructed soldiers differ. English officers as a rule maintain the possibility of a formidable Russian invasion of India, and on the other hand Russian officers as a rule deny that it is practically possible; but it must be confessed that, whilst military writers generally take a pessimistic view of the prospects of their own country, the indications afforded by the writings of officers belonging to neither of the two countries make against my per-

sonal view as set forth above. Foreign military writers, as a rule, do not so highly estimate the difficulties of a Russian advance upon India as do the Russians themselves. They maintain that forces advancing from the Oxus and from the Caucasus would meet at Sarakhs, and would easily occupy Herat, and then bring the railway almost to Herat, before the English could have put forty thousand men at Quetta. Another Russian army would take the more difficult line of advance southward from Siberia through Balkh. They calculate that England, did she give up all idea of fighting in Europe and on the Pacific, and did she confine her attention to the advance on India, would only be able to place another forty thousand men in the field at the end of three months from the declaration of war. These would be troops sent from England, and the calculations of foreign writers may from next month be affected by the promised reform in our arrangements for the prompt mobilization of two army corps. The Continental writers assume that by the use of Goorkhas and other special native troops the native army could be kept quiet, that is, kept from turning against us in the field, and even used for keeping up communications, but that its quality is not good enough to allow of its being used against Russian troops. They assume that the English position in India being perfectly known to the Russians, while the Russian position in central Asia is not well known to the English, the Russians might be able by the use of money to produce some troubles which might lead to railway and other difficulties upon the lines of communication. It is assumed also that the English concentration would take place on the Helmund or at Kandahar, and that the Russians could advance, without serious molestation either from the English or the Afghans, up to near that point. The Russian numbers in the Caucasus being practically without limit, it is assumed that by the use of the steam tramway which they are rapidly making towards their frontier over a very easy country the Russians could place any conceivable number of men upon the upper Murghab, where they would be faced by an English force of eighty thousand men with two hundred guns at Kandahar, if indeed England can share two hundred guns from India and from England after the recent foolish reduction of artillery. Assuming that we were at war with Russia only, the troops would come through the Medi-



terranean, but if we were at war as one of a coalition with a coalition in which either France or Italy was against us, this route could not be used, and they must come round the Cape. If we were trying to hold Egypt against France the whole of these calculations fall to the ground, inasmuch as the force which could otherwise be sent from England to India would have to be kept in the Mediterranean or in Egypt. The foreign observers assume that the native army is not sufficiently trustworthy to allow those few regiments which are capable of fighting against Russians to be sent out of India, but if the Goorkhas and the best of the Punjaub cavalry were to be sent to Kandahar the number of the army there must be diminished by an equal number of British troops left in India to take care of the communications and of the ordinary Sepoys. The Russian army advancing from Balkh, which would bring with it light guns only, would occupy Cashmere and threaten the Punjaub sufficiently to require an increase in the Punjaub frontier force and in the garrison of Peshawur, but the main struggle would take place in the neighborhood of Kandahar. Foreign writers think that Russia, having in the eyes of the Indian people the advantage of the advance and of the attack against a power remaining on the defensive only, would have the sympathies of the Oriental population on her side. They assume that the Turcoman cavalry, which are excellent, and which, while animated by strong Mahometan feelings, are now enthusiastically Russian, would mask the Russian advance with a force which would conciliate the native population. They believe that the Russian organization in central Asia has been a marvellous success, and that the native princes of India think that the Russians would respect the usages of the people more thoroughly than we do. They assert that the late maharajah of Cashmere was, as might be expected, in Russian pay, a fact confirmed by my own knowledge of recent Russian intrigue with deposed and exiled princes from the Punjaub.

The whole of these views, though they are taken by many foreign writers, appear to me exaggerated. I believe in the superior popularity of England among the native princes to any which may be thought to be enjoyed by Russia. I doubt whether the Russians have more than a few hundred Turcoman cavalry ready for a long march; but, above all, I think that Russia would have, for a great number of years

to come, far more difficulty in finding the enormous train which would be necessary for marching one hundred thousand men across from Herat to Kandahar than we should find difficulty in supplying an army of eighty thousand men at Kandahar, which would be sufficient to hold in check the advance of one hundred thousand Russians from the Caucasus and twenty thousand from Turkestan. The difficulties of obtaining camels and mules enough to move large armies in such deserts are largely, no doubt, money difficulties, but they are partly difficulties which even money will not meet, unless the money is spent for many years in advance in the formation of a permanent train upon an enormous scale. Real danger to India can only come after some revolution in Herat, or a dexterous use of Ayoub Khan, has brought Russia there as peacemaker, after years of possession of the Herat valley have restored it to its former fertility under irrigation, and Herat has been made a secure base for an advance, connected by railway both with the Caspian and with Turkestan. Herat will doubtless be taken one day by a sudden rush, for though something in the way of fortification has been done there of late, it is not properly protected by a sufficient number of detached forts, and cannot stand. But the end will not be yet. The present ruler of Afghanistan, in spite of his long residence in Russia, never was pro-Russian, and may be trusted in the event of a Russian invasion. He, if still on the throne, would ask us to supply his army with the newest arms, and would place a large force in line with us at Girishk or Kandahar, as well as do something to defend Herat. He is a powerful and able king. But he has an internal disease; his end may be hastened by poison, and in any case he is not likely to live long. Herat lies out of the Afghan country, and is an Afghan post, a little in the air, which, with a mobilization, accomplished on foot, which takes six months, the Afghan cannot efficiently defend. Our troops would reach Girishk from England before the ameer would reach Herat from Kandahar or from Cabul.

I shall, however, consider in the final paper of this series whether it has not become necessary for England to adopt a more modern military organization, which, without imposing upon her heavier monetary sacrifices, would enable her better to perform her obligations—such as that defence of the Afghan frontier to which

she is now resolutely bound. In the great efforts which England would put forth in the event of war with Russia, an attack upon Vladivostock could only be a matter of time. Even if we had to pour the whole of our available forces into India to be sent up to Kandahar, the embodied militia and the new forces raised in England would within a few months give us troops for an expedition of the kind. Those foreign observers who doubt the possibility of our holding our own upon the Afghan frontier admitted the significance of our occupation of Port Hamilton, and have been amazed at its abandonment. The Russians, creeping down the coast after the annexation of the district round Vladivostock, and of the island of Saghalien and the archipelago between Saghalien and Kamschatka, were casting eyes towards the Corea. Port Hamilton was wisely occupied as a base from which, with or without a Chinese alliance, Russia could be attacked on the Pacific. No doubt the occupation of windy and desolate stations is a nuisance to the navy in a time of peace; but to let Port Hamilton go, upon any promises, unless with the clearest possible treaty understanding that it would at once be strongly fortified by China, and that China would continue to be friendly to ourselves, was, in face of the difficulty of successfully attacking Russia in other portions of the globe, simple madness. It is vital to us that we should have a coaling station and a base of operations within reach of Vladivostock and the Amoor at the beginning of a war, as a guard-house for the protection of our China trade and for the prevention of a sudden descent upon our colonies; ultimately as the head station for our Canadian Pacific railroad trade; and at all times, and especially in the later stages of the war, as an offensive station for our main attack on Russia. But it must be, of course, a defended station, and not one to which our fleet would be tied for the purpose of its defence. It is possible that Japan might be tempted, by the offer of Saghalien, which we could easily detach from Russia, to join us in the war, and her alliance would be useful. But that of China would be essential, and whether she required to be guaranteed in the possession of our conquests in the Pacific and on the Amoor, or whether she asked for upper Burmah, her alliance ought at all hazards to be secured. China and England have identical interests in

Asia, and they are menaced by Russia in an equal degree. They trade together to an extraordinary extent, and are more closely allied by trade than are any other two countries in the world. Surely these considerations point to a permanent alliance between the countries. England could have no objection to the increase of German influence in China; but the test of the success of English influence at Peking will be found from time to time in the choice of Sir Robert Hart's successors.

The conclusion, then, to which we come is, that such is the patriotism of the Russian people, such the certainty that in the event of war Nihilism would disappear, and every Russian support the policy of his tsar, such the defensive strength of Russia in Europe, such her offensive power from the Caucasus towards India, that not only is war with Russia to be deprecated as a terrible calamity, but that it would strain the powers of the British Empire to the utmost. At the same time I hold, as will have been seen, that even in a single-handed struggle we should ultimately win; that we should be able, although only by a tremendous effort, to hold our own in the neighborhood of Kandahar, to prevent insurrection in India, and to check invasion; that we could not unassisted save Turkey, if Turkey were menaced in the war; that as against other powers we could not hold Egypt or save the Mediterranean route; but that, holding India and the Mauritius and the Cape, we could carry the war into the enemy's country on the Pacific and destroy, at all events at any time during the life of those now living, Russia's power on the Pacific, and, indeed, probably tear away the Pacific provinces from her empire.

With all respect to Lord Randolph Churchill, this hardly seems the time for reducing the defensive power of the empire. It was with Lord George Hamilton that at Christmas last he had his sharpest struggle. Now Lord George Hamilton was unduly optimistic in his recent speeches. The defences of the empire have for some time past been played with a little by the two great parties in the State. Taking the navy for example, when the Liberals are in, the Tories declare that the fleet is non-existent, but the moment their turn comes the Tory first lord informs us that the British navy is equal to any three navies in the world. So too with the occupation of Port Hamilton and the fortification of our coaling stations

generally. But the navy is not the only part of our warlike services which even Liberals should have in view. We may dislike the fact as much as we choose, but we are not now an island power. By the, in my opinion, unfortunate prolongation of our Egyptian occupation we have increased our military responsibilities, and even without that occupation they were none too light. Even disregarding the Anglo-Turkish Convention, as it is generally admitted we must, our responsibilities are still very great.

The defence of India we cannot disregard; and the defence of India of itself will, as I have shown, in the opinion of foreign observers, prove too much for us; and in the opinion of qualified English military judges at all events tax our powers to the utmost. There is cause for anxiety in the still unsettled condition of the central Asian frontier question, on which Parliament has been kept in the dark since the appearance of "Central Asia, No. 5, of 1885." No. 6 was laid on the table and was ordered to be printed, but it was, I believe, afterwards withdrawn, and Parliamentary curiosity seems to have been confined to quarters nearer home. The Russians are at this moment strongly entrenched at Zulikar and at Akrobat, and the boundary is still unsettled. War, however, not between England and Russia only, but war generally it may be hoped is likely to be avoided. No sufficient cause has been shown for the coming upon Europe of so terrible a calamity; but war will not be made less likely by our weakly yielding to the other powers upon such questions as those of the violation of engagements to us in the case of the New Hebrides; and the interests of the empire will not be best promoted by attempting to save sixpences upon the artillery or upon the navy. With regard to the army, we should be led too far in the present article if we attempted at this point to discuss the principle which ought to preside over its reorganization. This may be left by me for treatment in the last article of the present series, that on the position of England. It is enough for the present to say that the reduction at the beginning of February of the British horse artillery is not only the death-knell of British intervention for the preservation of Belgian neutrality, but constitutes in itself an increase of the standing temptation to Russia to attack us in Hindostan. Horse, or any form of field artillery is the most difficult of all arms to improvise under pressure.

From Chambers' Journal.

RICHARD CABLE,

THE LIGHTSHIP MAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MEHALAH," "JOHN HERRING,"  
"COURT ROYAL," ETC.

CHAPTER X.

JACOB'S LADDER.

"YOU have been a long time at the Hall," said Mr. Cornelis, when his daughter returned with a heightened color.

"Have I? I did not know I had been absent any considerable time."

"The hour and a half must have passed very agreeably. You do not usually find the society of that old imbecile entertaining; nor he yours sufficiently pleasant to make him care to detain you. Perhaps," he added with a sneer, "you have been elsewhere."

"I have not been elsewhere, papa."

"And pray, what has kept you all this while?"

"We have been talking."

"Does he want me to play billiards with him?"

Josephine considered a moment, then laughed, and said: "Really, papa, I do not know. I forget. If he told me, I do not remember."

"Your conversation must have been mightily engrossing, if you cannot recall an answer to a message. What was it about?"

"You desire me to tell you?"

"O no," answered Mr. Cornelis in his cold, contemptuous tone. "If I were to insist, and you were indisposed to comply, you would tell me lies."

Josephine's cheeks flushed. She had some difficulty in controlling herself sufficiently to say in a subdued tone: "Do I generally tell you lies, papa?"

"I do not know. I do not care to inquire. I dare say you do, when asked inconvenient questions."

Josephine walked up and down the room. "Why, papa, do you always imagine evil of me, and — of every one? It is enough to make one bad. Is the world full of nothing but swindlers and liars and hypocrites?"

"Angels do not tenant earth here."

"Nor devils either."

"Perhaps not — a generation which is a mixture of both; but the gravitation is downwards. Did you ever hear of any one flying off into angel-tenanted space? No, my dear; we keep our feet planted on the earth, and are insensible to centrifugal action, but alive to that which is centripetal."

"Papa, do you remember that man on the pier at Walton with an apparatus by means of which he pretended he could see through a brick?"

"What of that?"

"He did nothing of the sort. You explained it as an optical deception, contrived by a series of mirrors hid in the apparatus. Those who peeped through the spyglass thought they saw through a brick, but they did nothing of the kind."

"Right; it was a deception."

"Well, I believe you are equally deceived when you assert that you see through every one you come across."

Mr. Cornellis bit his lip. He turned testily to his daughter and said: "You need not pace the room as if you were still striding the deck of the lightship."

She desisted at once, and left the room. She went out of the house, through the garden gate, upon the sea-wall, and walked there. The tide was out; a wide expanse of mud showed, and the mud exhaled its usual unsavory steam. Gulls made a clatter over it, collecting food; a heron sailed up and flew away as Josephine approached where it fed. The tears were in her eyes. She was hurt by her father's remark that she would answer him with lies. She knew his ways of thinking and speaking; she had rebelled occasionally heretofore; her conscience had acquired fresh sensitiveness of late, and she shook off his ugly scepticism, as false to human nature. She had seen a true man, had met with genuine, unselfish love, and had felt the charm it exercised. She began to suspect that there was a poetry and picturesqueness and music in the moral sphere as well as in mere external nature. She had been taught by her father, or had gathered from his conversation, scorn for the weaknesses of humanity, and now, with genuine surprise, perceived that there was infinite pathos and beauty in those very weaknesses.

The willows were quivering in the light wind, the leaves slenderly attached to the stem fluttered and flickered with a breath—their vibration exposed their silver lining. At one moment the trees stood dark against the sky, then a feeble puff sweeping over the mud-flat, brushed up the leaves, and converted the whole tree into a tree of snow exquisitely beautiful, a very tree for fairyland. Josephine did not walk up and down the sea-wall, lest she should seem to be pacing a deck; she felt in her heart her father's sneer. Accordingly, instead of pacing to and fro, she walked along it, and came, unintentionally, to the

willows and the dike, and looked into Cable's garden. Thence she heard children's voices. She went to the bridge, crossed the water, and entered the garden. She was drawn on by an invincible attraction. She saw a ladder set against the side of the house, a short ladder, for the cottage was but one story high, and Richard Cable was above the ladder on the roof, pruning the vine. He had his foot on the topmost rung, but rested his body on the trellis; and as he lopped off a young shoot with leaves and tendrils, he stooped with it to his little Mary, who sat just below her father's foot on a lower bar; and she stooped and handed the cluster of leaves to Effie, who sat a stage lower; Effie handed it to her twin sister, and Jane to Martha, and she to Lettice, and Lettice to Susie, and at the bottom sat Mrs. Cable with the baby, and insisted on the tiny hands receiving the cool, beautiful leaves from the little sister. The pretty children were thus on steps of the ladder one above the other, with the evening sun on their shining golden heads and white pinafores, and their smiling faces and dancing blue eyes.

Presently, Cable called for some tying-bast, and the baby was made to hold it to Susie, who received it and raised her arms over her head, when Lettice bowed and took the bast and passed it in like manner above her head to Martha, who in similar style delivered the bast to Jane, and so to Effie, and Effie likewise to Mary, and Mary to her father. The children were seated as masons on a ladder, when loading a scaffold.

Josephine stood where she had crossed, looking at the picture. It strangely moved her, it was so beautiful a picture of peaceful happiness. She did not know whether she had been observed. She hoped that she had been unobserved, and drew back. She would not break the happy chain, disturb the simple pleasure, by her appearance. She went back over the plank to the farther side of the moat, where were the willows, and walked on.

She felt very lonely, more so, after having witnessed this simple domestic interlude, than before. She thought of her father. What would have been his remark on what she had witnessed? The thought of him took the poetry out of the scene. She seated herself on the wall, built of chalk blocks brought from Kent by sea. Southernwood sprouted from the chinks, and fescue-grass; and sea-lettuce, now vividly green, pushed up its juicy fronds. She pulled some blades of grass

and bit the wiry stems. She contrasted her life with that of Cable. His was direct, real, and transparent. Hers was twisted, artificial, and clouded. There was not a spark of sincerity in it. Her whole course of education had been directed towards making her false. She had been taught accomplishments, not because, in music, in history, in knowledge generally, there was anything worth pursuit, but because it was necessary for her to be acquainted with sufficient to fill her place in conversation without exposing ignorance. She took a sprig of white southernwood between her hands and rubbed it, and was suffused with the strong odor from the bruised leaves.

The tide was running in along a channel between the sea-wall and the mud-banks, sweeping along with it fragments of sea-tangle, little green crabs, and various small shells. She pulled off her stockings and shoes and put her foot down into the running fresh water. She still bit the fescue-grass, musingly, looking into the tide as it curled about her delicate foot. It was a pleasure to be alone, and free to do as she liked; to sit, if she chose, with one foot in the water instead of two. She was startled to hear a step behind her. She looked round, and drew up her foot.

Richard Cable was there. "Miss Cornellis, I saw you pass our gate. As you did not come to us, I have come to you."

"O Mr. Cable!"—she always called him Mr. to his face, only "Dicky" when speaking of him to her father—"I did not like to interrupt you whilst you were pruning your vine."

"I was giving my pets a lesson," he said.

"A lesson! Of what sort?"

"A double lesson—to take their several seats and sit there content; and to form a part of the great chain of life, each assisting and assisted by the other."

"What!" exclaimed Josephine, with a tinge of her father's sarcasm in her tone. "Delivering a moral lecture to the infants!"

"No," he answered. "May I stay here a moment by you, miss? I said nothing to them. They take in these ideas naturally. Did you see how they were all of them, dear mites! on the ladder, and me at top, passing things up and down? It is not necessary for me to give a lecture on it. They couldn't understand it now if I did; but afterwards, when each takes her place in the social scale, she'll maybe remember how she sat on the ladder, and will pass good things down to those be-

low, and will also hand up what is due to those above. It is a picture of life, miss."

"You are a moralist, Mr. Cable."

"I don't know that, Miss Cornellis; but I have time to think aboard my ship, and turn things about in my head, and so I see much that escapes others who are in active work and have no leisure for considering. In autumn, when the grapes are ripe, I shall be on the trellis again, and all the children on the ladder. Then I shall pass down the bunches; and the first bunch Mary will deliver to Effie, and Effie to Jane, and so down to baby, and not one of them will touch a grape. Then the next will go down like to Susie, untasted by all those above, and the third to Lettice, and the fourth to Martha, and the seventh and last to Mary. I need not give a word of teaching about it; they learn of themselves that the strong and the older, and those high up, must stoop to help the weak and the young and the lowly. It comes of itself, without words."

"I do not know that your picture is a true parable," said Josephine rather bitterly. "I think that on the ladder of life we are all plundering the grapes and upsetting each other, to secure our seats, and the first touch of the clusters."

"The children will not do that; they see their father above them." Then Richard Cable said in a lower tone, with great gentleness in his voice: "Excuse me, Miss Cornellis; I came to you now because, whilst I was up the ladder about the vine, I saw at one moment all the seven pairs of blue eyes looking up to me—and then I thought of something you had said aboard the stranded boat, and I came down after you to tell you about it, for what you said troubled me."

"What was that?" asked Josephine.

"Do you remember saying that you had no trust, no faith; nothing and no one to look up to?"

"I may have said it. I do not remember."

"I do. It hurt me to think it was possible; and when I saw all the little eyes on the ladder looking up to their father—I thought of a pair of brown eyes that were not uplifted. Excuse me, miss." He stood up, and without another word walked away along the sea-wall.

Then Josephine let down her foot again into the water and stirred it in the transparent stream, and thought. Her face was grave, and the muscles about her mouth worked, and every now and then twitched convulsively. She sat on till the tide, ris-



ing higher, drove her from where she sat; then she put on her stockings and shoes again, and walked slowly along the sea-wall homewards. As she passed the garden of the Cables she looked into it without stopping. The children, Richard, were no longer there. The shadows of the great willows fell athwart the garden, cool and gray. She went on to her own home, and in and to her own room. There she saw her jacket thrown on the bed; her soap, which after she had last washed her hands, had slipped off the marble top of her stand, lay on the floor where it had fallen. Her comb was on the pincushion, her brush in the window, one of her walking-boots on the hearthrug, the other on a chair. She was angry, and went to the bell to summon the maid and scold her for neglect. But it occurred to her, as she had her hand on the rope, that her father was expecting company to dinner. The household was not large, and the few servants were required to bestir themselves and make a show. Anne was cleaning the plate; she was parlor-maid, lady's maid, and butler all in one. Anne must lay the cloth, have the silver and glass in excellent order, answer the door, dress the table with flowers, and bring in dinner. How could she also attend to Josephine's room?

"On the ladder, on occasion, we must stoop and help each other," said Josephine, letting go the bell-pull, half pouting, half smiling, and bending to gather up the fallen piece of almond curd soap. "I know what I will do — I will do more on the ladder. I will go down and arrange the flowers in the glasses for the table."

Whilst she was thus engaged, her father came into the dining-room.

"Papa," she said, "will you, or shall I, decant the wine?"

"I will do it. We must not have the cheapest. The rector pretends to know good from bad; but he is an impostor. His son, who is in the army, may have a more cultivated taste, and detect rubbish, so we must have some decent wine for him."

"Is any one else coming?"

"The rector's wife — that is all. I do not want a large party to-night. Dress becomingly, and show your best manners. When I bring out my inferior wines, you may wear what you like, and be rude. Behave yourself to-night; lay yourself out to please."

"To please whom? The rector?"

"No; his son, Captain Sellwood."

"And pray, papa, why should I make an effort to please him?"

"Because I always thought he admired you. He is heir to a good fortune; and it is important that you should not let him slip through your fingers."

Josephine's brow reddened, and her eyes sparkled with an angry light.

Mr. Cornellis looked coldly at her, and said: "Do not put on stage attitudes and attempt heroics. I have invited the family here solely on your account. If you do not provide for yourself, I will not provide for you."

"I have no particular eagerness to fish for husbands; I have no taste for that sport."

"It is high time, Josephine, that you should understand your position. I am nearly at the end of my means."

"There is my mother's fortune," said the girl, with a shrug of the shoulder and a toss of her head.

"Dissipated, my dear."

"How dissipated? It is mine."

"I was left trustee with full power to expend what was necessary on your maintenance and education."

"That has not exhausted it."

"It matters not how it is gone — gone it is."

"Then," said Josephine bitterly, "you misstated the situation, papa, by the use of a wrong possessive pronoun, when you said that you were nearly at the end of your means; you should have said you had come to the end of *my* means."

"I am not going to excuse myself to you," Mr. Cornellis said. "Your education, dress, and caprices have cost much money. The little fortune your mother left —"

"Papa," exclaimed Josephine, "I always heard that my mother was well off."

"Then you heard wrong. Her relations were displeased with her for marrying me, and she got nothing but what could not be kept from her. A good deal of that went before she died."

"Not all — there is surely the principal."

"The principal has been going like old Stilton. There is not much left; and before it is known that you are portionless, you must secure a husband."

"Under false pretences?"

"You would not blurt out to every one that we are on the eve of a financial collapse? I am not going to argue with you. A woman is usually keen-witted in such matters." He left the room with quick steps to get the wine.

Josephine had been arranging white lilacs and forget-me-nots in a little opal glass vase. Her hand trembled so that she shook out the flowers and they fell on the white cloth. She tried to pick them up and put them in, but could not do so; and as Anne then entered, she held out the flowers and vessel to the girl, and, with averted face, said, "Finish doing this for me, Anne." Then she ran up-stairs. Her cheeks were burning, her eyes hot, her temples throbbing. She was angry as well as distressed. Her father had rebbed her, and had acknowledged it with effrontery. Not only so, but he told her this coolly just as company were expected to dinner. She must bury her wrath and humiliation in her heart, and appear with a smiling face, affect a careless spirit, and use her efforts to entrap a man into an engagement, letting him believe her to be the mistress of a handsome fortune.

She leaned her elbows on the window-sill and looked over the garden out to sea. The tide was in, the bay was full of blue water. The sun had set; a still, sweet evening closed in the day. She saw a flight of white and brown winged fishing-boats coming in with the wind and tide. The sailors were returning to their homes with their spoils, to spend a quiet Sunday with their wives and children and parents; they were returning with light consciences; they had earned the bread for all the mouths that depended on them. It was otherwise in Rose Cottage. There, thought Josephine, the father, instead of laying by for his child, has wasted her fortune, and then bids her go forth and fish for herself with the net of fraud.

Her chin rested in her hands; her brows were knit; her lips quivered. No tears came into her eyes. "Was there ever," she said, "a more miserable, forlorn girl than I? What I said to Richard Cable is true. I have no one to whom I can look up. My ladder is lost in cloud."

#### CHAPTER XI.

##### THE SELLWOODS.

MR. CORNELLIS could make himself an agreeable host, and he took pains that evening to make it pass pleasantly to his guests. The rector was a florid man, a gentleman of good family, easy-going, generous, never harsh in judging any one, perhaps too ready to make allowances for the shortcomings of his parishioners. He, like Mr. Cornellis, knew the weaknesses of human nature, but made a different use of his knowledge. When his

gardener had been detected selling his pears and grapes to a fruiterer at Walton, he shrugged his shoulders and said it was human nature, lectured him, but did not dismiss him. When he heard that some of his Sunday-school teachers had got into moral scrapes, he said: "It is human nature; we must find substitutes;" and when Mrs. Sellwood showed him lumps of alum in the bread, he laughed, and said: "Millers and bakers are human beings!" and would not take away his custom. On Christmas day, his clerk was tipsy, and put in his amens wrong. "After all," said the rector, "it is human nature to rejoice on this day; we will pass it over."

His son, Captain Sellwood, was home from India, a handsome, ox-eyed man, with light hair, but dark eyelashes, a man with an inexpressive face, and solemn, inscrutable eyes. He was not a man of words. He sat listening to conversation, twiddling his moustache and sharpening it to needle-points, with his great, gloomy eyes on the speakers, moving them from one to the other, as they interchanged talk, but saying nothing himself. Some considered him stupid. This was not the case; he had plenty of intelligence, but he was not a talker. Ladies condescended to him, and tried to draw him out on the subject of India; but though he could speak on Indian topics, he felt that he was condescended to when India was brought on the carpet, and he left India lying there.

He felt keenly his inability to sparkle in society; the consciousness came on him in spasms. When such a spasm of consciousness came on, he uncrossed his legs and put the right leg over the left; at the next spasm, he put the left leg over the right. Some people, as already said, declared that Captain Sellwood's silence arose from stupidity; others said, from liver; others, again — and these were in the right — that his father had talked him down. The rector was a ready man in conversation, and fond of hearing his own voice. At his own table he monopolized the conversation, and this had affected the captain when he was a boy, and had made of him a listener, not a speaker. He had a wondering admiration for light badinage and small joking, for he was wholly incompetent to attain to sportiveness.

Mr. Cornellis took in Mrs. Sellwood; and the rector gave his arm to Aunt Judith; therefore, Josephine fell to the captain. She screwed up her mouth. She

was not pleased, both because he was a dull partner and she was not in a humor to talk; but also, and chiefly, because she knew her father's intentions, and her spirit rose in rebellion against him and his schemes.

"It is with dining as with virtue," said Mr. Cornellis. "We should love eating as we love virtue, for its own sake, not for what it may advantage us. You will have Sauterne with your fish, captain—tell me your opinion of it. I flatter myself it is good." Captain Sellwood bowed and said, "Very nice," but in such a toneless way that Cornellis was unable to discover what his real opinion was. Cornellis always made much of his wines, talked of their age, bouquet, and brand, as if he had a first-rate cellar; whereas he had no cellar at all, only a cupboard in the coal-hole where he kept a few dozen, and got his wine in as he wanted it. But by talking about his wine, and telling stories concerning the way in which he picked up this lot and that lot at sales or from old friends, he had acquired the credit of being not only a connoisseur, but of giving first-rate vintages at his table.

The Sauterne on this occasion was good. It was not always so; but this evening Cornellis did his utmost to catch the captain for his daughter, and did not withhold his best either in eating or in drinking. He used to say that Zriny, ban of Croatia, when he went against the Turks, put purses full of gold under his belt, so that if he fell, the enemy might hold his body in esteem; thus would all the world esteem the man who put good dinners under his waistcoat. The rector and his son would hardly suspect their host to be on the verge of bankruptcy when he gave them so excellent a repast.

But the captain, though he liked a good dinner, was not a man to lay store by it, and, perhaps, after the spiced dishes of India, he preferred plain English roast and boiled joints to any *entremets*, however delicate. He would have preferred a seat opposite Josephine, where he could have looked at her, instead of a place at her side, where he was obliged to talk to her. His observations came at intervals, and had no connection with each other. He said something about the weather, then was silent; and after ten minutes asked Josephine if she painted now; when she said that she did not, he fidgeted with his napkin, wiped his moustache, listened to what his father and Miss Judith were talking about, and then inquired whether

Josephine's aunt had been well during the preceding winter.

The jovial rector was in full flow of talk about parish matters. "I've no right to be here," he said; "I ought to be in prison with hard labor for a month. Instead of improving my parishioners, I demoralize them. What do you think is my last experience? I parcelled out my glebe so that some of the laborers might have fields and keep cows. I thought it hard that they should not have something to supplement their earnings on the farm. I even lent a couple of them money to buy cows. John Harvey was one, and he has got a month for it now."

"How so, rector?"

"Because he has been stealing mangold and turnips through the winter to feed his cow with, from Farmer Barons, with whom he worked. Barons thought his mangold was going, and so set a policeman to watch; then Harvey was caught. He argued that his cow must not starve, and that he had not the land or capital to till root-crops for her, and that I was to blame for letting him have the cow. He was once an honest man; I had converted him, with the best intentions, into a thief."

"He is let off pretty easy," said Aunt Judith.

"That is not all. The farmers who employed the other men that have cows have given them notice to leave their service, so they will be thrown out of situations and lay the blame on me."

"Is it not usually the case," said Josephine, "that when we seek to do good we blunder into mischief? Therefore, it is best to let men go their own wretched way for themselves."

Captain Sellwood turned and looked at the girl fixedly; his great eyes said nothing, but he wondered in his heart that one so young should speak with such want of feeling.

"I don't agree with you, Miss Josephine," said the rector. "It is human to err. We do not see things from all sides at once, and so we make mistakes. Some suffer; but we learn lessons, and correct our mistakes."

"We should try our experiments on ourselves, not on others," said Josephine. "You have been practising on the peasant, and the result is that the peasant has to suffer, not you."

"I beg your pardon; I suffer also. I shall not see back the twenty pounds I lent for the cow."

"It seems to me that you good people

are always making plans for the bettering of others, and all your plans when carried out aggravate the evil. Leave the poor and suffering alone, to work out their problems for themselves."

The great ox eyes of the captain were again on Josephine, and they annoyed her. She was determined, if possible, to to bring some life into them, so she said: "I believe in living only for self. Every animal does it. Why not we? We involve ourselves in a tangle when we begin to consider others, and get no thanks for our pains. Let us all fight our own way, and slap each other in the face if he persists in encumbering our path. I want help from no one, and will give no help to any one."

"My dear Josephine," said her father in a tone of sad reproach, but with eyes that expressed anger, "you are talking at random."

"Not a bit. I have well considered the law of existence. That is my law, simple, straightforward, and successful — like, yes, like the way of the sea-nettle in the tide."

"I do not think, my dear," said the rector, "that it is a way that will draw after it a wake of love and light."

"I speak what I think and feel," said Josephine, disregarding her father's warning glances, encouraged by perceiving some expression in the ox eyes of the captain, like a cat's-paw of wind in a quarry pool.

"No, my dear," said the rector, with a cheery smile on his red face; "I won't allow that you feel and think this, though you say it. Neither will I admit for a moment your likening yourself to a sea-nettle. To a cactus, if you choose — that has on it needles. A girl sometimes puts forth a bristle of sharp and piquant speeches; but it is not human nature, any more than it is cactus nature to produce only stings — the flower bursts out in the end, large, glorious, beautiful, and we forget all about the bristles as we stand over and admire the flower."

Josephine went on maliciously: "Mrs. Sellwood has been most kind to that boy Joe Cudmore."

"Yes; he is crippled with rheumatism, and bedridden."

"She has spent hours in the dirty cottage and the insufferable stuffiness of the sick-room teaching the boy to read."

"Well — yes," said the rector. "It was so sad to see the poor fellow confined to his bed with nothing to relieve the tedium."

"And — with what result?"

"He can read."

"Exactly. I was in the cottage the other day. We wanted the mother to come and char for us, and I found him devouring the police intelligence. You have roused in him a hunger for criminal biography."

"He reads his Bible too."

"I saw his Bible; you gave him one, with red edges, and the edges stuck together. It had not been read. What chance has the story of Abraham against that of Rush who murdered a household? That boy longs to recover the use of his limbs that he may emulate the glorious deeds of burglars, or at least of pick-pockets."

"You paint things in extreme colors," said the rector, a little discouraged.

"And the schools," continued Josephine — "I know how enthusiastic you are about them. The education given there has unfitted all the young people for the work required of them, or has given them a distaste for it. The farmers complain that of the rising generation, not one lad understands hedging; and their wives — that the girls will have nothing to do with milking cows and making butter."

"I remember," said the rector in an apologetic tone — he was unable to deny that there was truth in Josephine's words — "I remember some years ago there was not a man or woman in my congregation who could use the Prayer-book and Hymnal."

"And now," said Josephine, "that they can use them, they value them so little that the fires in the stove are lighted with the torn pages out of them; and the road between the school and church is scattered with dishevelled sacred literature."

Then the captain said: "Am I to understand that you think no attempt should be made to do any good to any one?"

"To any one except ourselves — yes," answered Josephine.

"You would in India allow suttees to continue, and Juggernaut's car to roll on and crush bones forever unobstructed?"

"Why not? Is not India becoming over-peopled, and the problem springing up, what is to be done with the overflow of population?"

"I think," said Mr. Cornellis with suppressed wrath, "I will ask you, rector, to return thanks."

"No," said the rector; "I am not going to say grace on such a sentiment. My dear Miss Josephine, we must not shirk a duty because it opens the door to a prob-

lem. It is the very fact that we are meeting problems which duty insists on our solving, that gives a zest and purpose to life. We make our blunders — well, that is inevitable; it is human to err; and our sons profit by our experience and avoid our mistakes. A child makes pothooks before it draws straight lines, and strums discords before it finds the way to harmonies. We must set an ideal before us, and aim for that; we may go wrong ways to work, but with a right heart; that will excuse our errors."

When the ladies were in the drawing-room, Mrs. Sellwood took a low chair before the fire, and in two minutes was asleep. The rector's wife was an excellent woman, who rose every morning at five, made her own fire, did her accounts, read the lessons for the day, and gardened, before the maidservants appeared. But it is not possible for the most energetic person to burn the candle at both ends with impunity, and she made up for her wakefulness in the morning by sleepiness at night, and invariably dozed off after dinner, wherever she was. This was so well known by her hosts, that she was generally allowed to go off quietly to sleep and have her nap before the gentlemen came from their wine.

Aunt Judith made no attempt to keep her guest awake; when she saw her nodding, she drew Josephine into the conservatory, and said: "My dear, how came you to speak as you did at table? You frightened the captain, and shocked his father."

"I am glad I produced some effect on the former, who seems to me to have inherited his mother's somnolence."

"But, Josephine, you know that Captain Algernon Sellwood has long been your admirer, and you are doing your best to drive him away."

"Let him go. I shall breathe freely when he withdraws his great dreamy eyes from me."

"My dear niece, I must be serious with you. He is a man worth having; he will have about fifteen thousand a year on the death of his aunt, Miss Otterbourne. He is a fine man, and belongs to a family of position. You could not expect to do better than take him. I speak now as your aunt, full of interest in your welfare. I must remark that your extraordinary and repellent manner this evening is not one to attract him to your feet. You are trifling with your opportunities, and before you are aware, you will be left an old maid."

"I do not care. An old maid can go

her own way, and a married woman cannot."

"No, my dear; an old maid cannot go her own way, unless she has a fortune at her disposal. Can I? I am helpless, bound to helplessness. I do not follow a husband; I have to follow your father. Remember, you have not a fortune. Your father has told you that misfortunes have fallen on us, and your money is gone. Have you made up your mind not to take Algernon Sellwood, if he offers?"

"I don't know; I have not thought about it."

"Do not take the matter so lightly. I am seriously alarmed about you — so is your father. Sooner or later, we shall have to give up our establishment, and disappear into some smaller place, and cut our expenses down to a low figure. It is not pleasant to have to pinch and clip. What stands in your way? You have never shown yourself so perverse before. Upon my word, I believe your head has been turned ever since that unfortunate affair of the lightship and Cable."

"Do not mention him," said Josephine abruptly.

"Who? Algernon Sellwood?"

"No; the other — Richard Cable."

"Why not?"

"Because when you do, I see what a man ought to be, and the captain pales into nothing before him. Whether Algernon Sellwood has brains and heart. I do not know; he is to me a doll that rolls its eyes, not a man with a soul."

"What do you mean, Josephine?" gasped poor Aunt Judith. "Gracious powers! you do not hint at such a preposterous folly as that —"

"As that, what? Speak out!"

"As that — I really cannot speak it."

"As that I have lost my heart to Richard Cable, the lightshipman, the widower, father of seven little children? No; I have not. Now, are you satisfied? I am not such a fool as you take me for."

Aunt Judith drew a long breath. "It would be impossible for you to marry beneath you — and to such a man!"

"Beneath me! Above me. We are all being dragged down. It is my fate never to have one to whom I can look up, whom I can call my own. There come the gentlemen."

As she and Aunt Judith entered the drawing-room through the French window, Mrs. Sellwood woke up, was wide awake, and said: "Yes — buttered eggs! I said so, Miss Cornellis — buttered eggs!"



"Been asleep, dear?" asked the rector, tapping his wife on the shoulder.

"No, Robert. I have been talking to Miss Cornellis about buttered eggs."

"Not even closed your eyes?"

"I may have *closed* them to consider better, but I have *not* been asleep. I have been giving a receipt for buttered eggs."

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From The Nineteenth Century.

#### THE TRIALS OF A COUNTRY PARSON.

My friends from Babylon the great are very good to me in the summer-time. They come in a delightful stream from their thousand luxuries, their great social gatherings, their brilliant talk, and their cheering and stimulating surroundings; they come from all the excitement and the whirl of London or some other huge city where men *live*, and they make their friendly sojourn with us here in the wilderness even for a week at a time. They come in a generous and self-denying spirit to console and condole with the man whom they pity so gracefully — the poor country parson "relegated," as Bishop Stubbs is pleased to express it, "to the comparative uselessness of literary (and clerical) retirement." I observe that the first question my good friends ask is invariably this: "What shall we do and where shall we go — to-morrow?" It would be absurd to suppose that any man in his senses comes to the wilderness to *stay* there, or that there can be anything to *do* there. A man goes to a place to see, not the place itself, but some other place. When you find yourself in the wilderness you may use any spot in it as a point of departure, but as a dwelling-place, a resting-place, never! Moreover I observe that, by the help of such means of locomotion as we have at command, the days pass merrily enough with my visitors in fine weather. But as sure as ever the rain comes, so surely do my friends receive important letters calling them back, much to their distress and disappointment. If the weather be *very* bad — obstinately bad — or if a horse falls lame and cannot be replaced, or some equally crushing disaster keeps us all confined to the house and garden, my visitors invariably receive a telegram which summons them home instantly even at the cost of having to send for a fly to the nearest market town. Sometimes, by a rare coincidence, a kindly being drops in upon us even in the winter. He is always

genial, cordial, and a great refreshment, but he never stays a second night. We keep him warm, we allow a liberal use of the "shameful," we give him meat and drink of the best, we flatter him, we coddle him, we talk and draw him out, we "show him things," but he never stays over that single night; and when he goes, as he shakes our hands and wraps himself up in his rugs and furs, I notice that he has a sort of *conflate* expression upon his countenance; his face is as a hybrid flower where two beauties blend. One eye says plainly, "I *am* a lucky dog, for I am going away at last," and the other eye, beaming with kindness, sometimes with affection, says just as plainly, "Poor old boy, how I do pity you!"

Well! this is a pitiful age; that is, it is an age very full of pity. The ingenuity shown by some good people in finding out new objects of commiseration is truly admirable. It is hardly to be expected that the country parson should escape the general appetite for shedding tears over real or supposed sufferers.

But it strikes some of us poor forlorn ones as not a little curious that our grand town friends never by any chance seem to see what there is in our lot that is really pathetic or trying. "How often do you give it meat?" said a blushing, mild-eyed, lank-haired young worthy in my hearing the other day. "Lawk! sir, that don't have no meat," answered the laughing mother, as she hugged her tiny baby closer to her bosom. "Never have meat? How dreadful!" Just so! But it is not only ludicrous, it is annoying to be pitied for the wrong thing; and though I am not inclined to maintain the thesis that we, the soldiers of God's army of occupation, who are doing outpost duty, pass our lives in a whirl of tumultuous and delicious joy, yet, if I am to be pitied, do let me be pitied intelligently. I cannot expect to be envied, but surely it is not such a very heavy calamity for a man never to catch a sight of *Truth* or the *World*, or to find that there is not such a thing as an oyster-knife in his parish.

Moreover, side by side with the pity, there is a large amount of much more irritating and ignorant exaggeration of the good things we are supposed to enjoy. We do not, I admit, hear quite so often as formerly about "fat livings" and "valuable preferment," nor about the "rectorial mansion with a thousand a year;" but we hear a great deal more about such abulous lands of Goshen than we ought to hear. There is always a disposition to represent

our neighbors as better off than ourselves, and whereas the salaried townsman knows that his income, whatever it may be, is his net income which he may count upon as his spending-fund to use as *he* pleases, when he hears of others as receiving or entitled to receive so many pounds a year, he assumes that they do receive it and that they may spend it as *they* please. The townsman, again, who moves among the multitude and every hour is reminded of that multitude pressing, as all fluids do "equally in all directions," hears, and sometimes he knows, that the clergy in the towns have immense claims upon their time and are always on the move in the streets and courts. They are always about, always *en évidence*. If a man has only to minister to a paltry seven hundred, what *can* he have to do? He must be a drone.

Moreover the aforesaid townsman has read all about those country parsons. You can hardly take up a novel without finding a sleek rector figuring in the volumes. These idealized rural clerics always remind me of Mr. Whistler's nocturnes. The figures roll at you through the mists that are gathering round them. The good people who try to introduce us to these reverend characters very rarely venture upon a firm and distinct outline. The truth is that for the most part the novelists never slept in a country parsonage in their lives, never knew a country parson out of a book.

A year or two ago my friend X. was dining in a London mansion. "Who's that?" said a lady opposite, as she ducked her head in his direction and looked at her partner. X. turned to speak to *his* partner, but could not help hearing the scarcely whispered dialogue: "A country parson, did you say? Why, he's tall!"

And their voices low with fashion, not with feeling, softly freighted

All the air about the windows with elastic laughter sweet.

It was quite a surprise to that lady novelist that a country parson could be tall! Many men are tall — policemen, for instance. But only short men ought to be country parsons. Why! we shall hear of one of them being good-looking next!

When any class of men feel themselves to be the butt of others, they are apt to be a little cowed. They hold their peace and fret, and if they resent their hard treatment and speak out, they rarely do themselves justice. Very few men can come well out of a *snub*, and the countryman who is not used to it never knows what to

reply to offensive language. Yet worms have been known to turn, not that I ever heard they got any good by it; they can't bite, and they can't sting, but I suppose it comforts them to deliver their own souls. Poor worms! Yes! you may pity them.

But if the country parson has his trials, how may he hope to be listened to when he desires to make it clear what they are? Where shall he begin? Where should he begin if not by pointing to that delicate nerve-centre of draped humanity, exquisite in its sensitiveness, knowing no rest in its perpetual giving out of force, forever hungering for renewal of its exhausted resources, feeling no pain in its plethora and dreading no death save from inanition — to wit, the pocket? Touch a man's pocket, and a shudder thrills through every fibre.

The country parson has a great deal to complain of at the hands of those who will persist in talking of him as an exceptionally thriving stipendiary. It is one thing to say that in all cases he gets more than he deserves; it is quite another to put forth unblushingly that his income is half as much again as in fact it is, and his outgoings only what the outgoings of other men are. Logicians class the *suppressio veri* among sophisms; but would it not be better to call that artful proceeding a fraud? "Drink fair, Betsy, whatever you do!" said Mrs. Gamp on a memorable occasion. Yes, if it is only out of the teapot.

I. With regard to the income of the country parson, it may be laid down as a fact not to be disputed, that hardly one per cent. of the country clergy ever *touch* the full amount which theoretically they are entitled to receive. In the case of parishes where the land is much subdivided, and where there are a number of small tithepayers, it would be almost impossible for the clergyman personally to collect his dues; he almost invariably employs an agent, who is not a likely man to do his work for love. Even the agent can rarely get in all the small sums that the small folk ought to pay. Even he has to submit to occasional defalcations, and to consider whether it is worth while to press the legal rights of his employer too far. Moreover, the small folk from time immemorial have expected something in the shape of a tithe dinner or a tithe tea, for which the diners or the tea-drinkers do not pay, you may be sure; this constitutes a not inconsiderable abatement on the sum

total of receipts which ought to come to hand at the tithe audit.

Taking one year with another, it may be accepted as a moderate estimate that the cost of collecting his tithe *plus* bad debts in some shape or other amounts to six per cent., and he who gets within seven per cent. of his clerical income gets more than most of us do. But the law allows of no abatement in respect of this initial charge; and because the law takes up this ground, the world at large assumes that the nominal gross income of the benefice does come into the pockets of the incumbent. The world at large is quite certain that nobody in his senses makes a return of a *larger* income than he enjoys, and if the parson pays on 500*l.*, people assume that he does not get *less* from his living than that. The world at large does not know that the parson is not asked to make a return. The surveyor makes up his books on the tithe commutation table for the parish, and on that the parson is assessed, whatever he may say.

II. For be it known it is with the surveyor or rate-collector that the parson's first and most important concern lies. Whatever he may receive from his cure, however numerous may be the defaulters among the tithe-payers, however large the expense of collecting his dues, the parson has *to pay rates* on his gross income. The barrister and the physician, the artist or the head of a government department, knows or need know nothing about rates. He may live in a garret if he likes; he may live in a boarding-house at so much a week; he may live in a flat at a rent which covers all extraneous charges. I suppose we most of us have known men of considerable fortune, men who live in chambers, men who live in lodgings, men who live in college rooms, who never *directly* paid a rate in their lives. Our lamented H., who dropped out recently, leaving 97,000*l.* behind him, invested in first-class securities, was one of these languidly prosperous men. "I do detest violent language on any thubject whatever," he lisped out to me once. "I hope I thall never thee that man again who ththorment at rate-collectorth tho. What *ith* a rate-collector? Doth he wear a uniform?"

But a country parson and all that he has in the world, *qua* country parson, is ratable to his very last farthing, and beyond it; the fiction being that he is a landed proprietor, and as such in the enjoyment of an income from real property. It is in vain that he pleads that his nominal in-

come is of all property the most unreal; he is told that he has a claim upon the land, and the land cannot run away. It is in vain that he plaintively protests that he would gladly live in a smaller house if he were allowed—he *does* live in it, chained to it like a dangerous dog to his kennel. It is in vain that he urges that he cannot let his glebe, and may not cut down the trees upon it—that he is compelled to keep his house in tenantable repair, and maintain the fences as he found them. The impassive functionary expresses a well-feigned regret and some guarded commiseration; but he has his duty to perform, and the rates have to be paid—poor rates, county rates, school-board rates, and all the rest of them; and paid upon that parson's gross income—such an income as never comes, and which everybody knows never could be collected.

You may say in your graceful way that a parson does not pay a bit more than he ought to pay, and that he may be thankful if he be allowed to live at all. That may be quite true—I don't think it is, but it *may be*—but there are some things that are not true, and one of them is, that the gross income awarded to the country parson on paper gives anything approaching to a fair notion of the amount of income that comes to his hands. And if you are going to pity the country parson, do begin at the right end, and consider how you would like to pay such rates as he pays on *your* gross income.

III. But when the country parson's rates have been duly paid, the next thing that he is answerable for is the land-tax. The mysteries of the land-tax are quite beyond me. If I could afford to give up three years of my life to the uninterrupted study of the history and incidence of the land-tax, I think, by what people tell me, I might get to know something about it, and be in a position to enlighten mankind upon this abstruse subject; but as I really have not three years of my life to spare, I must needs acquiesce in my hopeless ignorance even to the end. Only this I do know, that, whereas the country parson is called upon to pay eightpence in the pound for income tax, he is called upon to pay nearly ninepence in the pound for land tax; at any rate, I know one country parson who has to do so.

Let the land-tax pass—it is beyond me. But how about the income tax? As I have said above, in the case of all other professions except the clerical, a man makes his return of income upon the *available* income which comes to him after

deducting all fair and reasonable *office expenses*. But for the crime of clericalism, the country parson is debarred from making any such deductions as are permitted to other human beings. Many of the "good livings" in East Anglia have two churches, each of which must be served. A man cannot be in two places at once; and the laws of nature and of the Church being in conflict, the laws of the Church carry it over the laws of nature, and the rector has to put in an appearance at his second church by deputy—in other words, the poor man has to keep a curate. If he were a country solicitor who was compelled to keep a clerk, he would deduct the salary of the clerk from the profits of his business; but being only a country parson, he can do nothing of the sort; he has to pay income tax all the same on his gross returns. A curate is a luxury, as a riding-horse is a luxury; and the only wonder is that curates have not long ago been included among those superfluous animals chargeable to the assessed taxes.

IV. Perhaps the most irritating of all imposts that press upon the country parson is that to which he has to submit because the churchyard is technically part of his freehold. In many parts of the country a fee is charged for burying the dead. In the diocese of Norwich there are no burial fees. The right of burying his dead in the churchyard is a right which may be claimed by any inhabitant of the parish; the soil of the churchyard is said to belong to the parishioners; the *surface of the soil* belongs to the parson. This being so, the parson is assessed in the books of the parish for the assumed value of the herbage growing upon the soil, and on this assumed value he is accordingly compelled to pay rates, income tax, and land tax. Of course the parson could legally turn cattle or donkeys into the churchyard to disport themselves among the graves; but happily that man who should venture to do this nowadays would be thought guilty of an outrage upon all decency. Who of us is there who does not rejoice that this state of feeling has grown up among us? But the result is that the churchyard, so far from being a source of income to the parson, has become a source of expense to him in almost all cases. Somebody has to keep the grass mown, and see that God's acre is not desecrated. Few of us grumble at that; and some who have large resources pride themselves on keeping their churchyards as a lawn is kept or a garden. But it

surely is monstrous when everybody knows that the churchyard, so far from bringing the parson any pecuniary benefit, entails an annual expense upon him which is practically unavoidable—it is monstrous, I say, that the parson should be assessed upon the value of the crop which might be raised off dead men's graves, and that he should be taxed for showing an example of decency and right feeling to those around him.

'Well! But why don't you appeal?'

My excellent sir, do you suppose that nobody ever has appealed? Do you suppose that very original idea of yours has never occurred to any one else before? Or do you suppose that we the shepherds of Arcady find appealing against an assessment, made by our neighbors to relieve themselves, before the magistrates at quarter sessions is a process peculiarly pleasurable and particularly profitable when the costs are defrayed? We grumble or fret, we count it among our trials, but we say, "After all, it is only about five shillings a year. Anything for a quiet life. Let it go!" So the wrong gets to be established as a right. But it is none the less a wrong because it continues to exist, or because in coin of the realm it amounts to a trifle. Was it Mr. Midshipman Easy's nurse who urged in excuse of her moral turpitude in having an infant of her very own, "Please, ma'am, it was *such* a little one"?

The grievance of having to pay rates on the churchyard may be in one sense a little one. But when it comes to being charged rates upon the premiums you pay upon your insurance policies, some of them—the fire insurances—being compulsory payments, and upon the mortgage of your benefice effected in your predecessor's time—even the sneerer at a sentimental grievance could hardly call such charges as these not worth making a fuss about. In many a needy country parson's household the rates make all the difference whether his children can have butter to their bread or not.

It must be obvious to most people from what has been already said—and much more might be said—that unless a country parson have some resources outside of any income derivable from his benefice, he must needs be a very poor man. Our people know this better than any one else, and it is often a very anxious question on the appointment of a new incumbent whether he will live in the same style as that which his predecessor maintained.

Will he keep a carriage, or only a pony chaise? Will he employ two men in the garden? Will he "put out his washing"?\* Will his house be a small local market for poultry and butter and eggs? Will he farm the glebe or let it? How many servants will he keep, and will the lady want a girl to train in the kitchen or the nursery from time to time? Such questions as these are sometimes very anxious ones in a remote country village where every pound spent among the inhabitants serves to build up that *margin* outside the ordinary income of the wage-earners, and which helps the small occupiers to tide over many a temporary embarrassment when money is scarce, and small payments have to be met and cannot any longer be deferred.

Let me, before going any further, deal with a question which I have had suggested to me again and again by certain peculiar people with dearly beloved theories of their own. It is often asked, Ought clergymen ever to be rich men? Is not a rich clergyman out of place in a country parsonage? Does not his wealth raise him too far above the level of his people? Does it not make him sit loosely to his duties? Does not the fact of a country parson being known to be a rich man tend to *demoralize* a parish?

Lest it should be supposed that the present writer is one of the fortunate ones rolling in riches, and therefore in a manner bound to stand up for his own class — let it be at once understood that the present writer is a man of straw, one of those men to whom the month of January is a month of deep anxiety, perplexity, and depression of soul. Yet he would disdain to join the band of whining grumblers only because one year after another he finds that he must content himself with the corned beef and carrots, and cannot by hook or by crook afford to indulge in some very desirable recreation or expense which the majority of his acquaintance habitually regard as absolutely necessary if existence is to be endured at all. No! I am very far indeed from being a rich man; but this I am bound to testify in common fairness to my wealthier brethren in the ministry of the Church of England, that if any impartial person, with adequate knowledge of the facts, were asked to point out the most devoted, zealous, unworldly, and practically efficient country parsons in the diocese of Norwich — for let me speak as

I do know — he would without hesitation name first and foremost some of the richest of the clergy in the eastern counties.

Do you desire that your son should begin his ministerial life under a man of great ability, sound sense, courage, and religious earnestness, a man who never spares himself and will not suffer his subordinates to sink into slovenly frivolity and idleness, then make your approaches to Lucullus, and you will have cause to thank God if the young fellow serves his apprenticeship under a guide and teacher such as this. He will learn no nonsense there, and see no masquerading, only an undemonstrative but unflinching adherence to the path believed to be the path of duty, and a manliness of self-surrender such as can only arouse an enthusiasm of respect and esteem.

Does "our own correspondent" wish to see how a score of infamous hovels can be changed into a score of model cottages which pay interest on the cost of their erection, and which in half-a-dozen years have helped perceptibly to raise the tone and tastes and habits of the population till it really looks as if some barbarians could be civilized by a *coup de main*? — let him pay a visit to the parish of our Reverend Hercules, only one of whose many labors it has been to cleanse an Augean stable. It will do him good to see the mighty shoulders of that rugged philanthropist, him of the broad brow and the great heart and the deep purse, always at work and always at home, about the very last man in England to be suspected of belonging to the sickly sort of puling visionaries.

Do you want to meet with a type of the saintly parish priest, one after holy George Herbert's heart, one with hardly a thought that does not turn upon the service of the sanctuary or the duties that he owes to his scattered flock? Come with me, and we will go together and look at one of the most beautiful village churches in the land, on which our devout Ambrose has spent his thousands only with deep gratitude that he has been permitted to spend them so — and with never a word of brag or publicity, never a paragraph foisted into the newspapers. And as we pass out of that quiet churchyard, trim as a queen's parterre, I will show you the window of that little study which Ambrose has not thought it right to enlarge, and if he be not there, be sure we shall find him at his school or by the sick-bed of the poor, or inquiring into some case of sorrow or sin where a kindly hand or a wise word may

\* This is a matter of very great importance in hundreds of country parishes, where the washing of the rectory frequently suffices to maintain a whole family.



peradventure solace the sad or go some way to raise the fallen.

What country parson among all the nine hundred and odd within this unwieldy diocese has lived a simpler or more devoted life than our Nestor — *γέρων ἱππηλάτα Νέστωρ* — he who for more than threescore years and ten has gone in and out among his people, and doing his pastoral work so naturally, so much as a matter of course, that no one thinks of his being a rich man, except when those towering horses of his stop at our lowly portals and have to be corkscrewed into our diminutive stables?

And who knows not of thee, Euerges, treasurer and secretary and general mainstay of every good work, the idol of thy people and their healer, the terror of the impostor, and the true friend of all that deserve thy helping hand and purse? or thee, too, Amomos, who after thirty years of work as an evangelist in the city, spending there thyself and thy substance all the while, hast now betaken thee to the poor villagers, if haply some little good may yet be done among the lowly ones before the night cometh when no man can work?

"But do not such well-meaning gentlemen as these *demoralize* the poor?" Oh dear yes! of course they do. It is so very demoralizing to help a lame dog over a stile. It does so pauperize a broken-down couple to whom the poor-law guardians allow three shillings a week and half a stone of flour, if you give them a sack of potatoes about Christmas time. It corrupts and degrades Biddy Bundle to bestow an old petticoat upon her when she is shivering with the cold, and it takes all self-respect and independence from the unruly bosom of Dick the fiddler to offer him your old hat or a shabby pair of trowsers. The truest, wisest, most far-sighted and most magnanimous charity is to let Harry Dobbs have "an order for the house" when he is out of work and short of coals — Harry Dobbs, who set himself against all the laws of political economy, and married at eighteen, when he had not the wherewithal to buy the chairs and tables. So we country parsons are a demoralizing force in the body politic forsooth, because we cannot bear to see poor people starve at our gates. We have been known actually to give soup to a reckless couple guilty of twelve children; actually soup! And we have dropped corrupting shillings into trembling hands only because they were trembling, and distributed ounces of tobacco to the inmates of the Union, and poisoned the souls of old

beldames with gratuitous half-pounds of tea. And we counsel people to come to church, when they would much rather go to the public house, and we coddle them and warm them now and then, and instead of leaving them to learn manliness and independence and self-reliance on twelve shillings a week, we step between them and the consequences of their own improvidence, and we disturb the action of the beautiful laws of the universe, and where we see the ponderous wheels of Juggernaut just going to roll over a helpless imbecile who has tripped and dropped, we must needs make a clutch at him and pull him out by the scruff of the neck, and tell him to get up and not do it again. And all this is *demoralizing* and *pauperizing*, is it?

Out upon you! you miserable prigs with your chatter and babble! *You* to talk of the parson's narrowness and his bigotry and his cant? *You* to sneer at him for being the slave of a superstition? *You* to pose as the only thinkers with all the logic of all the philosophers on your side, all the logic and never a crumb of common sense to back it? Bigotry and intolerance and cant and class jealousy and scorn — that refuge for the intellectually destitute and the blustering coward — where will you find them in all their most bitter and sour and hateful intensity, if not among the new lights, the self-styled economists? And we have to sit mum and let brainless pretenders superciliously put us out of court with a self-complacent wave of the hand, as they give utterance to perky platitudes about the clergy pauperizing the working-man. No, Mr. Dandy Dryskull. No! this gospel of yours, a little trying to listen to, is being found out; ours will see the end of it.

You preach Sir Andrew and his love of law, And we the Saviour and his law of love!

I, for one, hereby proclaim and declare that I intend to help the sick and aged and struggling poor whenever I have the chance, and as far as I have the means, and I hope the day will never come when I shall cease to think without shame of that eminent prelate who is said to have made it his boast that he had never given a beggar a penny in his life. I am free to confess that I draw the line somewhere. I do draw the line at the tramp — I do find it necessary to be uncompromising there. Indeed I keep a big dog for the tramp, and that dog, inasmuch as he passes his happy life in a country parsonage — that dog, I say, is *not* muzzled.

But don't you get imposed upon? "Don't you get asked to replace dead horses and cows and pigs and donkeys, that never walked on four legs and no mortal eye ever saw in the land of the living?"

Of course we do! Is it a prerogative of the country parson to be duped by a swindler? Oh, Mr. Worldly Wiseman, were you never taken in? Never! Then, sir, I could not have you for a son-in-law! As for us—we country parsons—we do occasionally get imposed upon in very absurd and contemptible fashion. Sometimes we submit to be bled with our eyes open. A bungling bumpkin has managed to get his horse's leg broken by his own stupidity. We know that the fellow was jiggling the poor brute's teeth out of his mouth at the time, or the animal would never have shown himself as great an idiot as his master. But there stands the master horseless, with the tears in his eyes, and we know all about him and the hard struggle he has had to keep things going, and we say to ourselves, "I wonder what would happen to *me* if my horse dropped down dead some fine morning. Who would help *me* to another? and what then?" So we pull out the sovereign, and give the fellow a note to somebody else, and that is how we demoralize *him*.

Or another comes at night time and wants to speak to us on very particular business, and implores us to tide him over a real difficulty and—"What! do you mean to say you lend fellows money?" Yes. I mean to say I have even done that, and very, very rarely repented of it, and I mean to say there are men, and women too, to whom I would lend money again if I had it; but it does not follow that I could lend it to everybody, least of all that I could lend it to you, Mr. Worldly Wiseman. Try it on, sir! Try it on! and see whether you would depart triumphant from the interview!

Moreover, the country parson has always to pay a little—just a very little—more than any one else for most things that come to his door. The market has always risen when he wants to buy, and has always suddenly fallen when he wants to sell. The small man's oats are invariably superior to any one's when he has a small parcel to dispose of to the parson. As to the price of hay, when the parson has to buy it, that is truly startling. I never see half a rood of carrots growing in a laborer's allotment, but I feel sure I shall have to buy those carrots before Christmas, and sorry as I am to observe

how rarely any fruit trees are ever planted in a poor man's garden, I reflect that perhaps it is just as well, for already the damsons and the apples that besiege the rectory are almost overwhelming. I never ask what becomes of them, but it is morally and physically impossible that they should be eaten under this roof. "But, my dear, you must buy Widow Coe's damsons; nobody else will, you know!" This is what I am told is considering the poor people. That is our way of putting it. You, Mr. Worldly Wiseman, you call it demoralizing them.

Then, too, the country parson is expected to "encourage the local industries." I wonder whether they make pillow-lace in Bedfordshire as they used. If they do, and especially if the demand for it in the outer world has waned, the country parsons' wives in that part of England must have a very trying time of it. Once, when I was in the merry twenties, a dirty old hag with an evil report, but no worse than other people except that she was an old slut, knocked at my back door and asked to see "the lady shepherd." Mrs. Triplet was a Mormonite, at any rate her husband was; and it was credibly believed that Mrs. Triplet herself had been baptized by immersion in a horsepond in the dead of night, dressed as Godiva was during her famous ride, and seated, not upon a palfrey, but upon a jackass. How Triplet could ever have been converted to a belief in polygamy with his experience of the married state, I am entirely unable to explain. But Mrs. Triplet came to our door and asked for "the Lady Shepherd." It was a delicate piece of flattery. She must have thought over it a long time. Was not the parson the shepherd? a bad one it might be, a hireling, a blind leader of the blind, but still a shepherd. Then his wife must needs be a shepherdess—and she did not look like it—or a sheep—no! that wouldn't do at all—or the shepherd's lady—and shepherds don't have ladies; or—happy thought!—the lady shepherd.

Accordingly Mrs. Triplet asked for the Lady Shepherd. Mrs. Triplet in former times had been a tailor's hand, and in that capacity had made a few shillings a week by odd jobs for the Cambridge tailors in term time; but she had married, and now she lived too far away in the wilds to be able to continue at her old employment, and being a bad manager she soon had to cast about for some new source of income. In the more comfortable cottages in the eastern counties you may often see laid

out before the fire a mat of peculiar construction which sometimes looks like a small mattress in difficulties. It is made from selvages and clippings, the refuse of the tailor's workshop; these strips of cloth are cut into lengths of two or three inches long by half an inch wide, and are knitted or tightly tied together with string, the variously colored scraps being arranged in patterns according to the genius and taste of the artist. The complex structure when completed is stuffed with the clippings too small to be worked up on the outside, and the mass is then subjected to a process of thumping and stamping and pulling and hammering till at last there exudes—yes! that is the correct term, whatever you may say—a lumpy bundle, which in its pillowy and billowy entirety is called a hearthrug. The thing will last for generations, it never wears out, and it takes years of continuous stamping upon it before you can anyhow get it flat. It was one of these triumphs of industry that Mrs. Triplet desired to turn an honest penny by. Would her ladyship come and look at it *in situ*? Now the lady shepherd is a woman of business, which the shepherd, notoriously, is not, and if she had gone alone no great harm would have come of the interview; but on that unlucky day the shepherd and his lady resolved to go together. That is a course which no shepherd and shepherdess should ever be persuaded to follow. Two men will often help one another when associated in a difficult enterprise; two women will almost always do better together than single-handed, but a man and a woman working together will always get in one another's way. On the occasion referred to the quick-witted old crone saw her chance in a moment, and commenced to play off one of her visitors against the other with consummate skill. From a hole beneath the narrow stairs she dragged the massive structure, and slowly unfolding it before our eyes commenced to stamp upon it in a kind of hideous demon dance, gazing at it fondly from time to time as if she could hardly bear to part with it.

In those days the fashion of wearing gay clothing had only just gone out among the male sex. For, less than forty years ago, we used to appear on state occasions in blue dress coats and brass buttons, and at great gatherings you might see green coats and brown ones, mulberry coats and chocolate ones, and there was a certain iridescence that gave a peculiarly sprightly look to an assembly even of males in those days, which has all passed away now.

Hence when Mrs. Triplet displayed her *exhibit* we found ourselves gazing at a very gaudy spectacle. "There, lady! And I made the pattern all myself, I did. Many's the night I've laid awake thinking of it. Ah! them bottle-greens was hard to get, they was; gentlefolks has give up wearing greens. But that yaller rose, lady. Ain't *that* a yaller rose?" For once in her life the lady shepherd lost her nerve. Spasms of hysterical laughter wrestled within her, and her flushed face and contorted frame betrayed the conflict that was raging. How would it end, in the rupture of a vein or in shrieks of uncontrollable merriment? The shepherd was in terror; he stooped to the foolishness of flattery; he went as near lying as a shepherd could without literally lying; but comedy changed to tragedy when from his lean purse he desperately plucked his very last sovereign, and giving it to that guileful old sorceress, ordered her to bring that hearthrug to the parsonage without delay.

Next week—the very next week—came a pressing offer from another parishioner of another of these articles of home manufacture; next month came a third, though the price had dropped fifty per cent. which was accepted with exultant thankfulness. There was positively no stopping the activity of the new industry; until, before three months were over, six of these fearful contrivances had been all but forced upon us, one of them travelling to our door in a donkey-cart and one in a wheelbarrow—the lady shepherd being told she might have them at her own price, and pay for them at her own convenience—only have them she must; the makers could by no means take them away.

"Well, but you had nobody but yourselves to thank. How could you be so weak and silly?"

That may be very true. But do not our trials—our smaller trials—become so just because we have only ourselves to thank for them? We in the wilderness are exposed to temptations which go some way to make us silly and soft-hearted. Somehow, few of us are certain to keep our hearts as hard as the nether millstone. I do not pretend to be one of the seven sages; what I do say is that we country parsons have our trials.

It is, however, when the country parson has to buy a horse that he finds himself tried to the uttermost. Day after day, from all points of the compass, there appear at his gate the cunningest of the cunning and the sharpest of the sharp;

and if at the end of a week the parson has not arrived at the settled conviction that he is three parts of a fool, it is impossible for him to dispute that the whole fraternity of horsey men feel no manner of doubt that he is so. Now, I don't like to be thought a fool; not many men do, unless they hope to gain something by it. The instinct of self-preservation or the hope of a kingdom might induce me to play the part of Brutus; but in my secret heart I should be buoyed up by the proud consciousness of superior wisdom. When, however, it comes to a long line of rogues—one after another for days and days without any collusion—continuing to tell you to your face, almost in so many words, that you certainly are a fool—it really ceases to be monotonous and becomes, after a while, vexatious. The fellows are so clever, too; they have such an enviable fluency of speech; they are possessed of such a rich fund of anecdote, such an easy play of fancy, such a readiness of apt illustration, and such a magnificent command of facial contortion, expressive of the subtlest movements of the heart and brain, that you cannot but feel how immeasurably inferior you are to the dullest of them in dialectic. But why should a man, when he asks you to try his charger, bring it round to the doorstep, tempting you to get up on the off-side?—what does he gain by it? Why should he tell you that “this hoss was a *twin* with that as Captain Dixie drives in his dog-cart”? Why should he assure you, upon his sacred honor, that “that Roman nose will come square when the horse gets to be six years old—they always do”? or that you always find bay horses turn chestnut if they're clipped badly?

These men would not try these fictions upon any one else; why should I suffer for being a country parson by being told a long story—with the most religious seriousness—of “that there horse as Mr. Abel had, that stopped growing in his fore-quarters when he was two and went on growing with his hind-quarters till he was seven—that hoss that they called Kangaroo, 'cause he'd jump anything—anything under a church tower, only you had to give him his head”? I used to get much more irritated by this kind of thing when I was less mellowed by age than I am; and I have learned to be more tolerant even of a horse-dealer than I once was. In an outburst of indignation one day, I turned angrily upon one of the fraternity, and said to him, “Man! how can you go on lying in this way; why won't

you deal fairly, instead of always trying to take people in?” The man was not a bit offended—indeed he smiled quite kindly upon me. “Lor', sir, do you suppose *we* never get took in?” I am fully persuaded that horse-dealer thought I was going to try the confidence trick with him.

I am often assured by my town friends that the *loneliness* of my country life must be very trying. I reply with perfect truth that I have never known what it is to feel lonely except in London. Some years ago one Sunday afternoon I was compelled to consult an eminent oculist. When the cab drove up to the great man's door in Cardross Square, his eminence was at the window in a brown study, with his elbows leaning on the wire blind, the tip of his nose flattened against the pane, his eyes vacantly staring at nothing. When we were shown into his presence, the forlorn and desolate expression on that forsaken man's face was quite shocking to the nerves. A painter who could have reproduced the look of aimless and despairing woe might have made a name forever. When people talk to me of loneliness I always instinctively recall the image of that famous oculist in the heart of London on a Sunday afternoon. Ever since that day I have never been able to get over a horror of wire blinds. Happily, they are articles of furniture which have almost gone out now, but they used to be fearfully common. Even now the Londoner thinks it *de rigueur* to darken the windows of his sitting-room on the ground-floor; and in furnished lodgings you must have wire blinds. Why is this? When I ask the question I am told that you *must* have wire blinds; if you didn't, people would look in. In the country we never have wire blinds, and yet nobody looks in; therefore you call our life lonely. But loneliness is not the simple product of external circumstances—it is the outcome of a morbid temperament, creating for itself a sense of vacuity, whatever may be a man's surroundings.

To sit on rocks, to muse on flood and fell,  
To climb the trackless mountain, etc.

I suppose we all know that wishy-washy stuff, so there is no need to go on with the quotation.

What *is* trying in the country parson's life is its *isolation*. That is a very different thing from saying that he lives a lonely life. The parson who is conscientiously trying to do his duty in a country parish

occupies a unique position. He is a man, and yet he must be something more than man, and something less too. He must be more than man in that he must be free from human passions and human weaknesses, or the whole neighborhood is shocked by his frailty; he must be something less than man in his tastes and amusements and way of life, or there will be those who will be sure to denounce him as a worldling who ought never to have taken orders. If he be a man of birth and refinement, he is sure to be reported of as proud and haughty; if he be not quite a gentleman, he will be snubbed and flouted outrageously. The average country parson and his family has often to bear an amount of patronizing impertinence which is sometimes very trying. Even the squire and the parson do not always get on well together, and when they do not, the parson is very much at the other's mercy, and may be thwarted and worried and humiliated almost to any extent by a powerful, ill-conditioned, and unscrupulous landed proprietor. But it is from the come-and-go people who hire the country houses which their owners are compelled to let that we suffer most. Not that this is always the case, for it not unfrequently happens that the change in the occupancy of a country mansion is a clear gain, socially, morally, and intellectually to a whole neighborhood — when, in the place of a necessitous Squire Western, and his cubs of sons and his half-educated daughters, dreadfully impecunious, but not the less self-asserting and supercilious, we get a family of gentle manners and culture and accomplishments, and lo! it is as sunshine after rain. But sometimes the newcomers are a grievous infliction. Town-bred folk who emerged from the back streets and have amassed money by a new hair-wash or an improvement in sticking-plaster. Such as these are out of harmony with their temporary surroundings; they giggle in the faces of the farmers' daughters, ridicule the speech and manners of the laborers and their wives, and grumble at everything. They cannot think of walking in the dirty lanes, they are afraid of cows, and call children nasty little things, and their hospitalities are very trying.

"Come, my boy. Have a cut at the venison. Don't be afraid. You shall have a good dinner for once; shan't he, my dear? and as much champagne as you like to put inside you!" It was a bottle-nosed Sir Gorgious Midas who spoke, and his lady at the other end of the table gave me a kindly wink as she caught my eye.

But the wine was Gilby's, and not his best. These are the people who demoralize our country villages. They introduce a vulgarity of tone quite indescribable, and the rapidity of the change wrought in the sentiments and language of the rustics is sometimes quite wonderful.

The people don't like these come-and-go folk, but they get dazzled by them notwithstanding; they resent the airs which the footmen and ladies' maids give themselves, but nevertheless they envy them and think, "There's my gal Polly — she'd be a lady if she was to get into such a house as that!" When they hear that the ladies up at the hall play tennis on Sunday afternoons, the old people are perplexed, and wonder what the world is coming to; the boys and girls begin to think that *their* jolly time is near, when they too shall submit to no restraint, and join the revel rout of scoffers. The sour Puritan snarls out, "Ah! there's your gentlefolks, they don't want no religion, they don't — and we don't want no gentlefolks!" For your sour Puritan somehow has always a lurking sympathy with the socialist programme, and it's honey and nuts to him to find out some new occasion for venting his spleen at things that are. But one and all look askance at the parson, and inwardly chuckle that he is not having a pleasant time of it. "Our reverend's been took down a bit, since that young gent at the hall lit his pipe in the church porch. 'That ain't seemly,' says parson. 'Dunno about that,' says the tother, 'but it seems nice.'" Chorus, half-giggle, half-sniggle.

Do not the scientists teach that no two atoms are in absolute contact with each other; that some interval separates every molecule from its next of kin? Certainly this is inherent in the office and function of the country parson, that he is not *quite* in touch with any one in his parish if he be a really earnest and conscientious parson. He is too good for the average happy-go-lucky fellow who wants to be let alone. There is nothing to gain by insulting him. "He's that pig-headed he don't seem to mind nothing — only swearing at him!" You cannot get him to take a side in a quarrel. He speaks out very unpleasant truths in public and private. He occupies a social position that is sometimes anomalous. He has a provoking knack of taking things by the right handle. He does not believe in the almighty dollar, as men of sense ought to believe; and he is usually in the right when it comes to a dispute in a vestry meeting because he is the only man in the parish that thinks of



preparing himself for the discussion beforehand. This isolation extends not merely to matters social and intellectual; it is much more observable in the domain of sentiment. A rustic cannot at all understand what *motive* a man can possibly have for being a bookworm; he suspects a student of being engaged in some impious researches. "To hear that there reverend of ours in the pulpit you might think we was all right. But, bless you! he ain't same as other folk. He do keep a horoscope top o' his house to look at the stares and sich."

Not one man in a hundred of the laborers reads a book, and only when a book is new with a gaudy outside does he seem to value it even as a chattel. That any one should ever have any conceivable use for a big book is to him incomprehensible.

"If I might be so bold, sir," said Jabez, an intelligent father of a family with some very bright children who are "won'erful for'ard in their larning," "If I might be so bold, might I ask if you've really *read* all these grit books?" "No, Jabez; and I should be a bigger dunce than I am if I ever tried to. I keep them to *use*; they're my tools, like your spade and hoe. What's that thing called that I saw in your hand the other day when you were working at the draining job? You don't often use that tool, I think, do you?" "Well, no. But then we don't get a job o' draining now same as we used. I mean to say as a man may go ten years at a stretch and never lay a drain-tile." "Well, then, how about the use of his tools all this time?" Jabez smiled, slowly put his hand to his head, saw the point, and yet didn't see it. "But, lawk sir! that's somehow different. I can't see what yow *can du wi'* a grit book like this here." It was a massive volume of Littré's great dictionary, which I had just taken down to consult; it certainly did look portentous. "Why, Jabez, that's a dictionary—a French dictionary. If I want to know all about a French word, you know, I look it up here. Sometimes I don't find exactly what I want; then I go to *that* book, which is another French dictionary; and if —" I saw by the blank look in honest Jabez's face that it was all in vain. "Want to know all about French words? Why you ain't a-going to fix no drain-tiles with them sort o' things. Now that du wholly pet me ayt, that du."

I think no one who has not tried painfully to lift and lead others can have the least notion of the difficulty which the country parson has to contend with in the

extreme thinness of the stratum in which the rural intellect moves. Since the schools have given more attention to geography, and since emigration has brought us now and then some entertaining letters from those who have emigrated to "furren parts," the people have slowly learnt to think of a wider area of *space* than heretofore they could imagine. Though even now their notions of geography are almost as vague as their notions of astronomy; I have never seen a map in an agricultural laborer's cottage. But their absolute ignorance of history amounts to an incapacity of conceiving the reality of anything that may have happened in past time. What their grandfathers have told them, that is to them history—everything before that is not so much as fable; it is not romance, it is a formless void, it is chaos. The worst of it is that they have no curiosity about the past. The same is true of their knowledge of anything approaching to the rudiments of physical science; it simply does not exist. A belief in the Ptolemaic system is universal in Arcady. I suspect that they think less about these things than they did. "That there old Gladstone, lawk! he's a deep un he is! He's as deep as the pole-star, he is!" said Solomon Bunch to me one day. "Pole-star?" I asked in surprise, "Where is the pole-star, Sol?" "Lawks! I dunno; I've heerd tell o' the pole star as the deep un ever sin' I was a boy!"

It is this narrowness in their range of ideas that makes it so hard for the townsman to become an effective speaker to the laborers. You could not make a greater mistake than by assuming you have only to use plain *language* to our rustics. So far from it, they love nothing better than sonorous words, the longer the better. It is when he attempts to make his audience follow a chain of reasoning that the orator fails most hopelessly, or when he comes to his illustrations. The poor people *know* so little, they read nothing, their experience is so confined, that one is very hard put to it to find a simile that is intelligible.

"Young David stood before the monarch's throne. With harp in hand he touched the chords, like some later scald he sang his saga to King Saul!" It really was rather fine—plain and simple too, monosyllabic, terse, and with a musical sibilation. Unfortunately one of the worthy preacher's hearers told me afterwards with some displeasure that "he didn't hold wi' David being all sing-song-ing and scolding, he'd no opinion o' that."

The stories of the queer mistakes which our hearers make in interpreting our sermons are simply endless, sometimes almost incredible. Nevertheless, no invention of the most inveterate story-teller could equal the facts which are matters of weekly experience.

"As yow was a saying in your sarment, 'tarnal mowing won't du wirout tarnal making—you mind that! yer ses, an' I did mind it tu, an' we got up that hay surprising!" Mr. Perry had just a little misconceived my words. I had quoted from "Philip van Arteveldt." "He that lacks time to mourn, lacks time to mend. Eternity mourns that."

Not many months ago I was visiting a good, simple old man who was death-stricken, and had been long lingering on the verge of the dark river. "I've been a-thinking sir, of that little hymn as you said about the old devil when he was took bad. I should like to hear that again." I was equal to the occasion.

The devil was sick—the devil a saint would be;  
The devil got well—not a bit of a saint was he!

[It was necessary to soften down the language of the original!]

"Is that what you mean?" Yes! it was that. "Well I've been a-thinking as if the old devil had laid a bit longer and been afflicted same as some on 'em, he'd a been the better for it. Ain't there no more o' that there little hymn, sir?"

The religious talk of our Arcadians is sometimes very trying—trying I mean to any man with only too keen a sense of the ludicrous, and who would not for the world betray himself if he could help it.

It is always better to let people welcome you as a friend and neighbor, rather than as a clergyman, even at the risk of being considered by the "unco guid" as an irreverent heathen. But you are often pulled up short by a reminder more or less reproachful, that if you have forgotten your vocation your host has not; as thus:

"Ever been to Tombland fair, Mrs. Cawl?" Mrs. Cawl has a perennial flow of words, which come from her lips in a steady, unceasing, and deliberate monotone, a slow trickle of verbiage with never the semblance of a stop.

"Never been to no fairs sin' I was a girl bless the Lord nor mean to 'xcept once when my Betsy went to place and father told me to take her to a show and there was a giant and a dwarf dressed in a green petticoat like a monkey on an or-

gan an' I ses to Betsy my dear theys the works of the Lord but they hadn't ought to be shewed but as the works of the Lord to be had in remembrance and don't you think sir as when they shows the works of the Lord they'd ought to begin with a little prayer?"

There is one salient defect in the East Anglian character which presents an almost insuperable obstacle to the country parson who is anxious to raise the *tone* of his people, and to awaken a response when he appeals to their consciences and affections. The East Anglian is, of all the inhabitants of these islands, most wanting in native courtesy, in delicacy of feeling, and in anything remotely resembling romantic sentiment. The result is that it is extremely difficult, almost impossible, to deal with a genuine Norfolk man when he is out of temper. How much of this coarseness of mental fibre is to be credited to their Danish ancestry I know not, but whenever I have noticed a gleam of enthusiasm, I think I have invariably found it among those who had French Huguenot blood in their veins. Always shrewd, the Norfolk peasant is never tender; a wrong, real or imagined, rankles within him through a lifetime. He stubbornly refuses to believe that hatred in his case is blameworthy. Refinement of feeling he is quite incapable of, and without in the least wishing to be rude, gross, or profane, he is often all three at once quite innocently during five minutes' talk. I have had things said to me by really good and well-meaning men and women in Arcady that would make susceptible people swoon. It would have been quite idle to remonstrate. You might as well preach of duty to an antelope. If you want to make any impression or exercise any influence for good upon your neighbors, you must take them as you find them, and not expect too much of them. You must work in faith, and you must work upon the material that presents itself. "The sower soweth the word." The mistake we commit so often is in assuming that because we sow—which is our duty—therefore we have a right to reap the crop and garner it. "It grows to guerdon after days."

Meanwhile we have such home truths as the following thrown at us in the most innocent manner.

"Tree score? Is that all you be? Why there's some folks as 'ud take you for a hundred wi' that *hair* o' yourn!"

Mr. Snape spoke with an amount of irritation which would have made an outsider

believe I was his deadliest foe; yet we are really very good friends, and the old man scolds me roundly if I am long without going to look at him. But he has quite a fierce repugnance to grey hair. "You must take me as I am, Snape," I replied; "I began to get grey at thirty. Would you have me dye my hair?" "Doy! Why that hev doyd, an' wuss than that — it's right rotten, that is!"

Or we get taken into confidence now and then, and get an insight into our Arcadians' practical turn of mind. I was talking pleasantly to a good woman about her children. "Yes," she said, "they're all off my hands now, but I reckon I've had a expense-hive family. I don't mean to say as it might not have been worse if they'd all lived, and we'd had to bring 'em all up, but my meaning is as they never seemed to die convenient. I had twins once, and they both died, you see, and we had the club money for both of 'em, but then one lived a fortnight after the other, and so that took two funerals, and that come expense-hive!"

It is very shocking to a sensitive person to hear the way in which the old people speak of their dead wives or husbands exactly as if they'd been horses or dogs. They are *always* proud of having been married more than once. "You didn't think, miss, as I'd had five wives, now did you? Ah! but I have though — leastways I buried five on 'em in the churchyard, that I did — and *tree on 'em beewities!*"\* On another occasion I playfully suggested, "Don't you mix up your husbands now and then, Mrs. Page, when you talk about them?" "Well, to tell you the truth, sir, I really du! But my third husband, he *was* a man! I don't mix him up. He got killed, fighting — you've heerd tell o' that I make no doubt. The others warn't nothing to him. He'd ha' mixed them up quick enough if they'd interfered wi' him. Lawk ah! He'd 'a made nothing of 'em!"

Instances of this obtuseness to anything in the nature of poetic sentiment among our rustics might be multiplied indefinitely. Norfolk has never produced a single poet or romancer.† We have no local

songs or ballads, no traditions of valor or nobleness, no legends of heroism or chivalry. In their place we have a frightfully long list of ferocious murderers: Thurtell, and Tawell, and Manning, and Greenacre, and Rush, and a dozen more whose names stand out pre-eminent in the horrible annals of crime. The temperament of the sons of Arcady is strangely callous to all the softer and gentler emotions.

There still remains something to say. In the minor difficulties with which the country parson has to deal, there is usually much that is grotesque, and this for the most part forces itself into prominence. When this is so, a wise man will not dwell too much upon the sad and depressing view of the situation; he will try to make the best of things as they are. There are trials that are, after all, bearable with a light heart. Unhappily there are others that make a man's heart very heavy indeed, partly because he thinks they need not be, partly because he can see no hope of remedy. It is of these I hope to speak hereafter.

AUGUSTUS JESSOPP.

From Murray's Magazine.

#### A TERRIBLE NIGHT.

RUSSIA, gigantic Russia, superb and powerful though she be, nevertheless conceals beneath her gorgeous robes and imperial grandeur an awful cancer that poisons the happiness, nay even threatens the very existence of the mighty empire. In this vast and magnificent country heroic self-devotion is closely allied to cowardly assassination. The friend we trust, may to-morrow be the murderer destined to slay. The hand that clasps yours in kindly pressure, may ere long place the cruel dynamite that will not only destroy the enemies of the nation, but that may inflict infinite suffering, if not death, on hundreds of innocent human beings.

To-day the savage cry for blood heeds not that multitudes must be sacrificed to ensure the destruction of one, doomed to die by the decree of a secret and irresponsible tribunal.

No man now dares trust his fellow. And alas! for the country where such things can be, women as well as men are but too often the perpetrators of cold-blooded and dastardly murders. Therefore it is

and conceived a horror of the "Faery Queen" in consequence.

\* A genuine Norfolk man never aspires at a *t* when followed by an *r*. It is always *trew* for through, *troat* for throat, *tree* for three, etc.

† I do not forget Crabbe — that sweet and gentle versifier. But the romantic element is wholly wanting in him. Very probably Sir Wilfrid Lawson would vehemently protest that Crabbe deserves to be reckoned among the greatest of the great. Was not his first poem entitled "Inebriety"? When a child I used to be told that Bloomfield's "Farmer's Boy" was equal to Spenser, but I concluded that Spenser must be very dull,

that in this gigantic, refined, yet barbarous country, events are occurring day by day that offer the most startling contrasts.

In the following narrative the names of persons and places have been changed and the minor circumstances are fictitious, but the principal incidents are, I believe, true. The terrible details were related to me in Russia by a relative of the unhappy woman I call Countess Nariscka.

Long residence with an uncle, who for many years was British minister at one of the small European courts, that of C—— (I purposely avoid giving the name), led to my acquaintance with numerous members of the principal families of Europe. One of my most intimate friends was a countess Nadine Fedorovna Nariscka, a young Russian widow, rich, handsome, brilliant in conversation and accomplishments, but as peculiar and eccentric as she was handsome and accomplished.

I suppose the sympathy we mutually felt was produced by the complete contrast between us; I was fair, quiet, and, as Nadine said, wofully English in all my ways and ideas. My friend, on the contrary, was fiery, impetuous in speech and action, and changeable as the wind. Her moods were as various as her toilettes. Her very beauty was eccentric. Not a feature was regular nor indeed good, but the too great pallor of the creamy skin seemed to enhance the dusky magnificence of the masses of dark hair coiled around her head, and when some eager thought, some eager word, sent the impetuous blood coursing through her veins, the deep-set eyes glowed with a light that was electric in its effect on those gazing into their sombre depths. But when annoyed or bored — a not unfrequent occurrence — then the mobile face expressed such scornful and mocking contempt, that all beauty in it seemed marred, and a slight cast outward of one of the eyes became distinctly visible, producing a most unpleasant, even sinister effect. But I loved her well, and even pitied her, for during her dark moods, religion became to her a very torture. At such times her mind seemed agonized by belief in every miserable superstition. She would inflict upon herself the severest penances, the longest and most distressing fasts prescribed by the Greek Church. A week later, and she would profess absolute scepticism. Then, intense as was her devotion to the Russian imperial family, almost slavish indeed, she was almost a Nihilist in the political opinions she ex-

pressed. The violence of her language on many subjects frequently caused me cruel alarm on her account. I expostulated, but in vain. She laughed at my fears, and only sought occasion to frighten me still more.

In truth she was a contradiction both in thought and action.

However, her wild, almost savage beauty, her tender, even caressing words, won all hearts. She reigned in our little world a queen. Even the women liked her. As for the men, they were her veriest slaves. The brightness of her words, the softness or the anger expressed in her eyes, were lures no man could resist; but apparently she laughed at all, and professed to despise them all.

A few weeks before the close of her stay at C——, a man arrived who, though showing her almost exaggerated devotion, was — I am convinced — absolutely uninfluenced by her; while she, on her side, though she treated him with even greater rudeness and brusquerie than others, was in some strange fashion subservient to him, and showed a certain deference to his wishes.

He was a countryman of hers — a Russian, a Count Xavier Perètkoff — tall, handsome, smooth-faced, smooth-tongued, and singularly accomplished. Though eminently courtly in manner, there was ever something in his flattering speeches and whispered words that inspired me with deep mistrust. I was nearly alone in this opinion, however, for he had wonderful success in our little society; nearly every one, from the court downward, pronouncing him to be one of the most delightful visitors that had ever arrived at C——. His stay, however, was not long. He came, he saw, and, I suppose, conquered. Then he went, and a few days after his departure Countess Nariscka left also. Nadine was very tearful and sorrowful when wishing me good-bye.

"You will forget me, my Lina," she said with real feeling in her voice; "your life is a happy one. You belong to a good country, to good people. You have a good heart, a good head; whilst I —" Here she sighed deeply, but would tell me no more.

"No, no," I cried; "yours is the happy life. Young, handsome, rich, with all the world at your feet, you can make of your life what you choose. Your future is in your own hands; you are free to do as you like."

"Free!" she exclaimed, with sombre bitterness; "free! How little you know

the realities of Russian life! Who amongst us is free? The veriest slave is not more bound —" Here she paused, cast a furtive glance around, and for some seconds was silent.

"But Lina," she continued, "should you ever come to Russia, here are my directions both in Moscow and in the country. I give you both, though it is barely possible you should ever find yourself near so remote, so forlorn a spot, in the poorest and most thinly inhabited part of our wild country. But my lands are there, my people are there, and I must be there myself soon. Farewell, dear, sweet Lina. Do not forget your Nadine."

So my friend and I parted, and, as years rolled on, our severance became complete, and our friendship was but a name, a remembrance only of the past.

These passing years brought many sad changes to me. My dear uncle died, and with him ended my happy life at C—. Then sorrows came fast and heavily, bringing bad health in their train. Thus it is that now in my declining years I am a constant wanderer, ever seeking health in change of place and scene. It so happened that having passed several months at Athens, and on the Bosphorus, I accompanied some Russian friends to Yalta, a charming little town on the Black Sea. I had intended going on with them to Moscow and St. Petersburg, but a few days before their departure I was seized with an attack of fever, so severe that it not only prevented my travelling with them, but would make it imprudent to move for at least ten days or a fortnight. This delay was vexatious, as I had hoped to arrive in Moscow in time for certain grand ceremonies; I had bethought me also of my old friend Countess Nariscka. It was now quite fifteen years since we had been together at C—, and nearly ten since we had corresponded.

I had learnt that she was still living, very rich and powerful by all accounts. My friends, who were court people, and belonged to St. Petersburg, knew her only by name, as she never appeared at court, and of late years had but rarely inhabited her magnificent palace in Moscow, residing almost entirely on her vast but remote country estate. However, I wrote to her, and hoped soon to hear from her.

Troubles never come alone. I was only beginning to recover from the attack of fever when my excellent servant, Giuseppe Moroni, my factorum and courier, received news compelling his instant departure for Italy.

"Be assured, Excellency," he said, "I will return as speedily as possible. In the mean time the proprietor of the hotel here tells me he knows an excellent Russian servant, who well understands travelling, and is acquainted with this country. He will take admirable care of the dear lady until I can rejoin her at Moscow. He is, in fact, waiting without, should her Excellency desire to see him."

I could but signify my assent. I must ere long move somewhere, for after a certain stage of the malady change of air became essential. In that case equally essential would be the services of a manservant.

Long residence on the Continent had made the acquisition of languages comparatively easy, and I had mastered sufficient Russian for the purpose of travelling; but my good old Scotch maid, Sarah Mackay, once my nurse, but for many years my maid, remained angrily faithful to her own tongue. She was usually so indignant at any new foreigner entering our little establishment, that I much dreaded her resentment on this occasion; but affectionate anxiety for me qualified her disapprobation, so instead of being cross and sulky, she was gracious and condescending, smoothing away difficulties, making, as she said, "the best of things."

She emphasized Giuseppe's good character of the Russian by declaring he was a "weel-faured mon," with a "vera smooth tongue in his head."

I felt such recommendations from both my servants must be sufficient. The new-comer must be engaged.

He was speedily brought into my presence. Serge Kounoff by name, a Russian Tartar by birth. I asked him in Russian a few questions, to which he answered promptly and pleasantly. He knew the country well. Was accustomed to travel. Was convinced he could make her Excellency comfortable. His master, a general of division, had a command in the Caucasus. He, Serge, had to go to Moscow, and was glad of employment, but was in no hurry if the gracious lady wished to travel slowly.

He was a good-natured looking fellow. I should have thought his face vacant and rather silly, but for a remarkable pair of little Tartar eyes, so wonderfully sharp and piercing, that they seemed in an instant to have noted everything in the room. Every object, before, on either side, even behind him, had been embraced in a series of rapid and intelligent glances.



It was fortunate I could speak a little Russian, for his English was of the weakest description, and of French and German he professed to be absolutely ignorant. He was not, he said, a courier, only a private servant.

So, the matter was arranged, and he entered my service at once. To my great relief Sarah really seemed to like him. Never before had she displayed such goodwill towards any foreigner. She understood his broken English, while he divined her queer Scottish phrases with equal readiness. So my good Giuseppe departed, and, thanks to his care, though I regretted him much, still as far as comfort was concerned I was as well attended to as when he was with me.

Days past and I got better; but as my health improved, my anxiety to be gone also gained strength. All my friends had now left Yalta, and weakness and loneliness caused time to hang heavy on my hands. The fever I had had, is also apt to produce depression, and a tendency to indulge in morbid fears and fancies.

Another reason, though one I scarcely acknowledged even to myself, was that I did not like my new servant (notwithstanding his many good qualities) as much as I had hoped to do. It seems a contradiction, but he was really too clever, too obliging. He seemed ever on the watch to obey my slightest behest. He was ubiquitous. He divined my wishes almost before they were uttered. He always saw everything. He always heard everything. He always knew everything; and I began to feel worried, almost irritated, at such constant surveillance. Yet what could I do? How could I resent service that came from zeal, and from such eager desire to be useful and obliging?

At length, understanding my impatience, the doctor agreed that if I could get a comfortable carriage, and would make but short journeys, I might leave as soon as I pleased. The energetic Serge speedily found such a carriage, and I settled to go first to S—, and there make a halt of some days.

The evening before my departure I went for the last time to a favorite spot commanding a superb view of sea and mountains.

For some time I sat there motionless, revelling in the perfect beauty and charm of the scene, then leaving my little carriage, I entered the garden of a villa, with whose owners I was acquainted. The family had returned to St. Petersburg, so the house was closed, and I believed

empty. What was therefore my surprise to see Serge, whom I had left at home packing, descend the steps of the verandah in company with a gentleman whose face was familiar to me, although I could not recall the name. The two were speaking together earnestly, so intently indeed, that though they passed tolerably near, neither saw me.

All the way home I puzzled myself over the familiar face. I made a careful mental revision of all the acquaintances I had had at Yalta, but no, this somewhat peculiar countenance did not belong to any one I had known here.

When I re-entered my rooms, Serge was diligently at work, as if he had never been away, and when I questioned him as to whom he had been talking with at Villa P—, it struck me that he was inclined to deny the fact of having been there. At any rate he hesitated a moment, and then said he had been asking the owner of the carriage about some alterations that were needed. As he spoke, however, full recognition of the face flashed upon me. The stranger was Count Xavier Perètekoff, somewhat aged, of course, and therefore to a certain extent altered, but the countenance was too remarkable to be ever completely changed.

"No, no!" I exclaimed, "the gentleman I saw is Count Perètekoff, an old acquaintance whom I have not met for years. Should he be in Yalta, I should like much to see him. Take my card at once, and ask him to do me the favor of calling upon me this evening."

"The gracious lady shall be obeyed, but there is no one of that name now in Yalta. The person to whom your servant was speaking is Alexis Petewitch Strogoff, and he by this time is already on his way to Sevastople."

I said no more, but I was nevertheless convinced the stranger whom I had seen was my former acquaintance Count Perètekoff. I could not be mistaken. Not only were the features similar, but the figure, movements, and the peculiar turn of the head were identical.

I hardly know why I wished to see Count Perètekoff again. I had never known him well, nor had I much liked him. The wish probably arose from his being associated with days long past, and also I thought he might have told me something about my old friend Nadine.

I hoped, however, to see her ere long, and in the bustle and business of preparing for a long journey I speedily forgot this little incident.

Serge proved himself an invaluable courier. But notwithstanding all his care my health suffered from the journey. Far from the change being of use, the attacks of fever were more frequent and more severe, and rendered me day by day weaker and more depressed.

On the evening of the fourth day I felt so ill, that continued travelling seemed almost insupportable, and yet, where to stop? The post-house at which we had arrived was the most miserable place I had yet seen. The house belonged to the *staroste* or chief man of the village. His wife had died but a few hours previous to our arrival, and her corpse was lying in an adjoining chamber. The women assembled were crying and howling in a frightful manner; of the men, including the bereaved husband, not one seemed even partially sober. The brandy bottles were handed about, drink being offered liberally to all new comers. I never saw so revolting, so degrading a scene. To remain there was impossible.

I groaned forth my desire to continue our journey, though I knew the next post was a distant one, the roads were terrible, and every jolt caused me exquisite pain.

The horses were being harnessed, when Sarah jumped out to see if the carriage could not be drawn into some yard, a little removed from the noisy crowd, so that I might rest quiet, at any rate, for the night; but even that comfort was unattainable; the village was squalid even beyond the generality of small Russian villages. It was a mass of mud and dirt, and reeked with evil smells. It would not be safe to remain in the forest, for the wolves were about, and great packs of them had already been seen in the neighborhood.

Whilst Sarah was thus occupied, Serge came to the carriage, and said in a low voice, as if anxious not to be heard by the people about, —

"If the gracious lady would not object, only a few versts from here is the great property of Vlovna, where her Excellency would find herself admirably placed. It belongs to the family Nariscki, and doubtless Nadine Fedorovna would be glad to receive so distinguished a guest."

"What!" I cried in astonished delight, and feeling better in a moment from having such good news, "the Countess Nariscka lives near here! she is the friend whom I hope to see in Moscow. Let us go there at once."

Serge gave some orders to the coachman, who was already in his place, and said he would drive on before us to choose

the best road, and also to inform the Countess Nariscka of my coming.

In another minute he had jumped into a little telega that was standing near, and had driven off.

I sank back in the carriage, inexpressibly relieved at the prospect of having some comfortable rest under the roof of a kind friend, instead of having to pass the night in a wretched post-house, or else being obliged to endure for many hours the jolts and jerks of an ill-built carriage.

Even this little excitement, however, had made me feel weak and faint, and Sarah returning at this moment, shaking her head, and pulling a long face at the ill-success of her search, devoted herself for the next quarter of an hour to administering sal-volatile, and rubbing my cold hands. At last I fell asleep, and slept until rudely awakened by the violent movements of the carriage. I roused myself, and called to the driver to go more carefully, and also slower, for we were being dragged at headlong speed over a track that did not deserve the name of road, being but a series of holes and sloughs of mud.

The man answered in a patois I did not understand, and only whipped his horses into a more furious pace. I looked out for Serge, but he and his telega had disappeared. By the fading light I saw that we were surrounded by forest. As far as eye could reach were interminable vistas of stunted fir-trees. We were evidently traversing one of those desolate tracts that in some parts of Russia extend over thousands of versts, and through which one may travel for hours without finding human habitation.

A sudden terror seized me. Two women in such a lonesome place, absolutely in the power of such a wild creature as the driver, who now, by loud cries and fierce gestures, was urging his horses to increased exertion. Again I called to him, and now to entreat to be taken back to the village we had left. It would be better to endure miseries we knew, rather than continue this journey through so dark and ugly a forest. But my entreaties were useless. The man either could not or would not understand.

Why had I allowed Serge to go? Why, indeed, had he left us in such a position? Alas! we were helpless. We could but be patient, and hope the best.

A drizzling rain was now falling, adding to the gloom of approaching night. To give myself courage, and also to comfort Sarah, I told her of our unexpected good

luck in finding ourselves so near an old friend, for we were going to Countess Nariscka. Sarah expressed herself greatly pleased, and for some time we talked about the comforts we should have later, and so consoled ourselves for present pains.

"Countess Nariscka is such a true friend," said I, "and she is so accustomed to our English ways, that I dare say we shall find ourselves quite at home at Vlovna, and so —"

I was going on, when Sarah with a stifled shriek caught my arm. "Oh! dear Miss Selina, my dear, dear child, don't go there! Whatever we do, don't go there! You think I can't understand, but I do. I pick up many things. That is a wicked place. A horrible place. People shudder when it is spoken of. For God's sake, don't go there!" and Sarah, trembling violently, held me tight in an agony of nervous terror.

Such words were not only an unexpected shock, but a dreadful one. Still, remembering my dear old friend, I could not believe they could relate to *her*. "Tell me all you know at once," said I decidedly. "What have you heard? What do you know?" Closely did I cross-question Sarah, but her answers were both incoherent and incredible. I gathered, however, that her alarm was principally caused by fear of ghosts, vampires, and such other evil creatures, so, knowing that like many Highlanders she was a profound believer in witchcraft, evil omens, and sinister portents, my mind was somewhat relieved.

In little more than another hour we were evidently approaching the confines of the forest. Large, irregular patches of ill-cultivated ground were now visible in the moonlight. Here and there was a miserable hovel, but at this hour of the night neither man nor beast was seen. As we passed through the collection of cabins that might be called the village, we could hear in the sheds an occasional stamping of horses' feet, and from the dwellings alongside, larger, though scarcely perhaps more cleanly than the stables, we could also hear the heavy snores of their probably intoxicated owners. The place we had left was squalid and wretched, but how much better than that where we now were! But a short distance from the village appeared a great mass of buildings, and the carriage passing through some lofty wooden doors and entering a courtyard, drew up before the portico of an immense house, a palace apparently in extent.

The white façade glittered in the moonlight, great pillars encircled the court, but the same light showed how ruined and dilapidated were the buildings, and all the many ornaments belonging to them. The plaster was peeling off the walls; of the pillars, many were broken; some, indeed, had fallen, and were lying unheeded on the ground.

The wooden roof was partly bleached from age, and was partly green from the mass of weeds and moss with which it was in many places covered. Several of the windows were boarded. In short, this grand house was but a fitting adjunct to the wretched village that belonged to it. Everything testified to hopeless neglect. The very air seemed tainted by the mould and decay around.

Alas! poor Nadine, can this be your home? I thought. It was piteous to think one so brilliant, so gifted, so calculated to shine in the world, should be compelled to pass even a portion of her life in so deplorable a dwelling, and I gave a sigh for her and another for myself, that we should be obliged to remain, even one night, in a place that seemed little better than a ruin.

Several servants in shabby liveries soon appeared, and I was conducted into the house, of which the interior was more comfortable, and better kept than the exterior led one to expect. The vast salon into which I was ushered looked however very bare and cheerless, but then the five large windows without curtains or blinds allowed the dismal landscape without to be seen in all its dreariness. Immediately beneath these windows was a sort of garden, if ragged patches of grass, a few half-empty flower-beds, and some groups of stunted bushes, can deserve to be so called. Between this and the dark line of forest the moon's rays glittered upon sundry patches of water, stagnant pools oozing from the boggy ground, and the moonlight, mingling with the light of the lamps in the salon, gave a curiously weird character to the desolate scene.

"Nadine Fedorovna will speedily wait upon her Excellency," said a servant.

I murmured the necessary civilities in reply, though feeling somewhat pained at so ceremonious and chilling a reception from a friend, once so much attached to me. For some minutes after the servant left I waited patiently; but as time went on, and the mistress of the mansion did not appear, I became nervous and uneasy. So, rising from my chair, I began pacing up and down the immense apartment.

The floor and walls were of yellow marble. Huge chairs, sofas, and tables were arranged along these walls. Of other signs of habitation there were none, but the air was warm and agreeable from the gilded stove that stood in one corner.

I had made a few turns, and was at the extreme end of the room, when I heard approaching footsteps. I turned quickly, as the doors were thrown open somewhat ceremoniously by a chamberlain or groom of the chambers, with other servants, and a lady entered.

I stood petrified. Could this be Nadine? This aged, yellow, faded woman? She was wrapped in a dressing-gown of magnificent silk. Costly lace hung about her arms and throat; but gown and lace had been carelessly thrown on, and her hair had been negligently twisted beneath a chenille net. Round her waist was knotted a common rope, and to this was attached a multitude of crosses, and little images of saints, some adorned with jewels of considerable value, others coarsely fashioned in lead or tin. Her whole appearance was untidy and ill-cared for; but it was the changed face that struck me with such infinite pain and amazement. The brilliant, wild, bright beauty had absolutely gone. Not a trace was left. Sallow and sunken, the once lovely countenance had lost all its fresh and beautiful outlines. The features were exaggerated; the nose pinched, the mouth swollen; the cast in the eye, once quite bewitching in its strange peculiarity, was now simply a defect and a deformity. The figure had lost all youthfulness of shape, and the hair was streaked with many lines of white.

But even worse than the loss of mere beauty was the haggard expression, the hopeless misery denoted by that careworn face. It told alike of severe physical pain, and even greater mental suffering.

I was stricken dumb. I was motionless with amazed distress. But great as was my surprise, my pain, it seemed nothing as compared with that of Nadine.

She stared at me for a moment in bewildered astonishment, then throwing her arms wildly in the air, she uttered a sharp cry.

"Merciful Heaven! is it possible, can it really be Selina Brownlow!"

In spite of the cry, the amazement, the changed person, I recognized the loving feeling of my old friend.

I hastened towards her. I seized her outstretched hands. I kissed her with the hearty enthusiasm of old days.

"Dearest Nadine, say at any rate you are glad to see your old, old Lina once again; but have you not seen my messenger, have you not received my letters to Moscow?"

"What messenger? What letters? No, no; yes—no. Oh, Lina! why did you come here? What miserable chance brought you to this——"

She fell upon my neck in a passion of tears, and kissed me with an affection that her words belied.

I knew not what to feel, what to think. Such a reception was as distressing as it was unexpected.

Fortunately at this moment the usual tea was brought in, and there entered at the same time a harsh-visaged young lady, whom Nadine shortly introduced as her *dame de compagnie*, Mademoiselle Tatjana Durscka.

The young lady bowed silently, looked askance at me, and proceeded to make the tea.

Nadine also relapsed into moody silence. Occasionally she clenched her hand, and muttered something to herself; but she did not speak again to me, and seemed preoccupied with anxious thought.

I, feeling singularly uncomfortable and distressed, also remained silent. Even the hot and refreshing tea failed to have its usual restorative effect, and I only felt anxious to go to bed, in order that as early as possible on the morrow I might quit this inhospitable dwelling.

As soon as the opportunity occurred, therefore, I shortly and ceremoniously asked Nadine if she would give me hospitality for that night, as I feared the next station was too far to permit of my journey being continued at so late an hour.

"Hospitality!" cried Nadine, suddenly rousing herself, "how can you speak so cruelly, Lina, as if you did not very well know that I would gladly give you everything I possess; ah! everything, everything, not to have you here," she muttered to herself in a low voice.

"But, Lina," she continued aloud, "why did you not come to Moscow, there we might have been so happy together, while now I doubt whether you——"

Mademoiselle Durscka, who was leaving the table, pushed the tray hastily aside, and one of the beautiful teacups falling to the ground was broken to pieces. The *dame de compagnie* exhausted herself in the most humble excuses and apologies, to which Nadine paid no sort of attention, but darting an angry glance at her, she took my arm, and begged me to accom-

pany her to the bedchamber prepared for me.

I was convinced the *accident* was intentional, either to attract Nadine's attention, or to recall something to her memory.

We passed through several salons and ante-chambers, until we arrived at that where I was to sleep. Comfortable *portières* hung over the doors and windows. The bed, in German fashion, stood at a considerable distance from the wall, and was quite shrouded by the curtains that were drawn closely around it. The air was warm and comfortable from the well-managed stove. In an opposite corner, partly hidden by a screen, was a small bed for Sarah.

To my surprise, however, Sarah was not there, neither had Serge appeared. I enquired for both, but was told Sarah was having tea. "Serge is no doubt drunk by this time," said Nadine quietly, "but, my dear," she continued, "you and I will have some supper here, away from Tatjana Andreovna's tiresome company."

Several servants now appeared, bringing all the materials for supper, and having arranged a table for two, and placed on it dishes that sent forth a most appetizing odor, they withdrew.

To my extreme surprise, before giving any of the meat to me, Nadine examined it most critically; then, with a sudden exclamation, she hurried to the window, opened it, and threw out the whole contents of the dish. By the splash that ensued there was water, a moat probably, on this side of the house.

Can she be mad? I thought, and a sudden fear came over me, as I looked at the wild, haggard face, the untidy costume, the changed appearance of my old friend.

But she again took her place at the table quietly, saying something about the cook's insisting upon putting spices or condiments into some dishes that would be sure to be disliked by, and would probably disagree with, a foreigner.

"One of our horrid national dishes," she said with a forced laugh. But, I thought, why throw it out of the window? Still I remembered that Nadine had always been eccentric, she had never done anything like other people, and probably our separation for so many years made her actions appear to me even more extraordinary than before.

Many dishes had been prepared, excellent in material, and well cooked, one more of which Nadine threw away; and until all had been examined she was uneasy and

restless, but at last we fell back into our old intimacy and talk. As of old, I told Nadine every circumstance connected with my life; and also, as before, while apparently talking most openly about everything, and seeming to give me every confidence, she in reality told me little or nothing.

At length she rose to leave. Embracing me most affectionately, even passionately, she whispered in my ear, —

"Mind, Lina, and attend carefully to what I say; do not eat or drink *anything*, excepting what I give you. Remember what I say, only that which I give you; take nothing from any other person. Our people are not to be trusted."

Then promising to send Sarah immediately, she went.

I was literally thunderstruck at such a warning. What could she mean? Were there poisoners around my friend, in her own house?

Again the idea of insanity occurred to me, and gained ground in my mind, as I remembered all the more than strange peculiarities my old friend had exhibited ever since I had been here.

Then how singular it was that I had never seen my servants since my arrival! Sarah's absence, especially, was extraordinary. Sarah, who watched over me with such care, and who never before had left me for many hours alone!

I was thoroughly perplexed and uncomfortable, and until my faithful attendant came, could not resolve to go to bed, although I felt the agueish fever was returning, and I was now thoroughly exhausted with so much fatigue and emotion.

At length I heard somebody coming — heavy, vague footsteps that moved awkwardly over the marble floors.

The door opened, and Sarah appeared, bearing in her hand a large silver goblet. But could this be Sarah? My horror was unspeakable. My good, my faithful friend and servant, was absolutely overpowered by drink.

She stumbled into the room, and stared wildly and stupidly at me, while the very atmosphere around her seemed infected by the horrid stuff she had been drinking.

I rushed to her.

"Oh my dear, dear Sarah!" I cried, "what have you been doing? You must be ill. You cannot knowingly have done this;" and I burst into tears at the sight of such degradation in my dear old friend.

I seated her in a chair, and dashed cold water in her face. This seemed to rouse her a little, though not effectually. She



still grasped tightly the goblet, which contained a quantity of sweet wine, and muttered something in an incoherent and unconnected manner about its being a sleeping-cup prepared by the hands of, and sent me by, Countess Nariscka.

I tried to take it from her, but she resisted my attempt, and before I could prevent her, had lifted it to her lips, and taken a long draught. Scarcely had she done so, than she fell back in the heavy sleep, or rather stupor of intoxication.

Seldom had I shed more bitter tears than I did over the miserable and shameful figure of my dear old friend. She was hanging partly over the chair. I could not bear to see her thus, so pushing and dragging it along the smooth floor, I managed to get to the side of my bed, which was the nearest, and placing my poor Sarah upon it as well as I could, I hoped in a few hours she might sleep off the results of her terrible condition.

I could not rest myself — I was far too disturbed, too pained, too unhappy. I got out my little book of prayers, and endeavored to soothe and tranquillize my mind by reading, and praying over the beautiful words and meditations it contained. Then I dozed from time to time. At last I suppose I must have fallen really asleep; but I was awakened suddenly by hearing deep, half-stifled, but terrible groans from the bed. I hastened to the side of my poor unhappy Sarah, and found that though still insensible, she was evidently suffering severely.

That she was in a most dangerous condition I could not doubt; both her appearance and her convulsive breathing convinced me of that. I never travelled without medicines, but in such a case I knew not what were the necessary remedies.

Severe as were the pains, the pressure on the brain seemed the most alarming symptom. I dragged aside all the curtains, threw open, though with some difficulty, the windows, and then rubbed the poor sufferer until she became a little easier; but help and medical advice she must have.

I searched vainly for a bell; none could I find, neither was there one in the antechamber.

Heedless of the danger of losing my way, and becoming confused in a large, strange house, I hurried on, leaving the doors open as I passed.

Some of them, however, were locked; occasionally, therefore, I had to retrace my steps, so I did become very puzzled;

but on I must go, as help was absolutely necessary, and of course with a servant there would be no difficulty in returning to my apartment.

Entering one small room very quickly, a sudden gust of wind extinguished the candle I carried with me. The moon, however, was shining through the uncurtained windows, and I could see a door nearly opposite, towards which I hastened, all the more comforted as I fancied I could hear subdued voices. Some persons, therefore, were awake in this huge wilderness of a house, and I should now soon have help. I hurried towards it, and pushing it open, found myself in a small gallery overlooking a vast and lofty hall. But I with difficulty restrained the shriek that nearly burst from my lips, and I almost fell to the ground with horror at the appalling scene before me.

Was I in Pandemonium? Was I witnessing a Sabbath of evil spirits? Could the beings before me be really men and women?

A dense mist partially filled the vast space below, and the air was heavy with sulphureous and other evil vapors. A few smoky lamps were suspended at rare intervals against the walls; but the principal light came from the lurid flames that burst forth at intervals from a species of furnace standing upon a table or altar placed at the far end.

From time to time a hand appeared from the gloom, and threw powder or other fuel into this furnace, and then the flames flared upwards with a blue and ghastly light, showing distinctly the awful figures that moved around.

It was difficult to believe they were human beings, so weird and terrific was their aspect. Most were nude to the waist, the few clothes that covered them being little else than filthy rags. Blackened with dirt, bleeding from recently inflicted wounds, many staggering under the weight of heavy chains, they moved slowly about their ghostly fire.

Occasionally a few words were said, then the frightful crash of a whip falling upon human flesh was heard, and succeeded by deep, heart-rending groans from the unseen sufferer.

At first between terror and astonishment, I could hardly distinguish objects; then, to my horror, I perceived that many of these wretched beings were women!

Of what horrible ceremony was I an unwilling witness? I dared not cry aloud, I was far too overwhelmed with terror; I moved gently back, hoping to refind the

door by which I had entered. Carefully I passed my hand along the wall, but neither opening nor lock could I discover. Again and again I tried. The gallery was small, and not an inch had I left unfelt. My poor Sarah! at all risks, however, I must get help for her, and I was about to cry aloud for aid, when my own name spoken distinctly, and by a voice I knew, caught my ear.

"Your prayer could not be received, Nadine Fedorovna; the Englishwoman, Selina Brownlow, is already dead. Her money was necessary to the cause. Had her life been spared, secrecy could not have been secured. There would have been scandal, and enquiry. It was impossible, therefore, to accede to your petition. In deference, however, to your wishes her death was ensured by kind and gentle means. Be content, and be silent. The moment of our devotion approaches. The heroism of our nature is about again to be put to the test. We must show by courageous endurance of bodily suffering that our hearts are steadfast to the great cause, and that no tortures that can be inflicted upon us by our enemies the tyrants, to destroy whom we readily dedicate our lives, can suffice to weaken our courage, or force us to betray those who have engaged with us to conquer or to die.

"Approach those who are prepared."

More fuel was cast on the furnace, from which was now shot forth lurid and fitful flames, making visible many long, thin rods of iron that were projecting from it.

The speaker seized one with his naked hand, and brandishing it aloft, endured without cry or groan the exquisite suffering it must have caused him. A frenzy now seized the wretched crowd; they threw themselves upon the red-hot bars, burning themselves, burning others, as if they were incapable of feeling, or of understanding what torture meant.

Then there was a sullen lull, and low suppressed groans and cries came from the miserable wretches.

Through the mist and smoke I could at intervals distinguish the writhing figures beneath.

Then the horror of the hideous sight, the awful sounds, the madness of the scene came upon me also in deepest intensity, and in my lofty gallery I fell crouching in the remotest corner, groaning heavily with those beneath in the agony of their sufferings, and from my own terror-stricken sympathy. But far away, hidden in the dimness of the great height,

and by the wreathing smoke, none saw, none heeded me.

Again was the voice of the unseen speaker heard.

"These are the torments we testify can be endured for the cause," he said in deep, hollow tones, that showed how strongly mental resolve was struggling to subdue bodily anguish. "None have faltered, none have shrunk affrighted from the stern ordeal.

"But woe to that man or woman who does retract, who hesitates when the supreme moment arrives! We swear, and let each man and each woman approach and swear, that whatever be imposed upon them, that duty they will fulfil, be it the sacrifice of husband, wife, child, parent, or of all that life holds dear.

"Woe to the degraded wretch who fails to obey!"

"We swear that not one torture that can be inflicted on human frame shall be or she be spared."

Then all drew near, and each resolutely took an oath, so awful in its words and character, that I dare not repeat it here.

Amidst all my terror, amidst all the agonies of my mind, a murmured prayer rose to my lips that Almighty Mercy might not record, might blot out the impious threats, the impious desires.

Again there was silence for a few moments; and then the same voice spoke.

"It were best that the bodies of the two women should be disposed of as secretly as possible."

As he spoke, there was a sound of steps as of persons moving, then a door closed, and once more silence fell upon the assembly.

I know not how long it lasted; it seemed an age, it was probably minutes, when those who had departed reappeared, bearing between them a lifeless figure.

"Oh, my Sarah, my dear, dear, faithful servant! can it indeed be you so cruelly done to death? Oh, my friend, my old once loving friend! is it possible that you have thus violated every law of hospitality, that you have thus required years of loving friendship?"

But now many persons, I could not distinguish how many, rushed into the hall in headlong haste.

The other, the lady, was said by deep and angry voices, she has gone, she has escaped. The windows were open, she must have fled by the moat. There must be traitors amongst us. And a muttered roar of suppressed fury rolled through the vast hall.

A second's pause, a second's indecision, then the stern and cruel voice of the president again was heard.

"We need have no fear. The wolves are about. They are all around. They must already have found their prey. But," and here the cruel voice gave forth its harsh and guttural tones more slowly and more savagely than before, "he who quails at the sacrifice of wife, or child, or of all he holds most dear, is unworthy to be the leader of noble and devoted hearts.

"Bring hither Nadine Fedorovna Peretekoff. I, her husband, devote my wife to the torture that her weakness and her cowardice have merited."

A miserable, trembling woman was pushed, or dragged, before the hideous altar. By the light that came from its quivering flames I could see the convulsed, agonized features, the deathly pallor of my most unhappy friend.

She fell on her knees.

"Oh! Xavier, Xavier! pardon — pardon! I could not kill her — I loved her so. She has been so good to me. She loved me. Ah! none have ever loved me as she has done. She asked of me food and shelter. No, I could not kill her. Oh! Xavier, Xavier! have mercy! I have given you all — all. For the love of the Blessed Virgin, spare me this once! By the memory of our dead children, spare me! Kill me if you will, but torture me no more! See how I have suffered, see how I have suffered! No, no," she cried, as she writhed in abject terror on the ground, "I can bear no more. Kill me, kill me, for the love of our Merciful Lady!"

The wretched creature burst into bitter tears, and tossed her arms wildly in the air. Then I saw the scarred and tortured flesh, the twisted and distorted limbs, the hideous tokens of man's sinful lust for power, of his wicked crushing of wretched instruments in order to carry out his own ends.

Without replying, he who stood before the altar, the man who in the world was the fascinating, accomplished Count Xavier Peretekoff, the husband of the beautiful and wealthy Countess Nariscka, now the avowed leader of a band of traitorous assassins and self-torturers, seized a large and heavy whip.

I heard the rush the thongs made as they were whirled through the air. I heard the horrid thud as they fell upon the bared shoulders of the victim.

A shrill scream broke the silence, and again the awful weapon descended.

I could endure no more — I could forbear no longer.

"Nadine! Nadine!" I shrieked. "I am here, I am here! You shall not suffer for me. Let them kill me if they will. God will avenge me. God will punish their wicked cruelty; but you shall *not* be tortured for me!"

Again I shrieked loudly in the exquisite agony of my mind. Then a mist came over me, and I fell to the ground; but hardly had the words left my lips when there was a sudden rush from below. I was surrounded by a horde of blackened and half-naked savages. They seized me, they dragged me down. They pulled me to the spot where my unhappy friend, dabbled with blood, lay before the glowing furnace. A cruel smile curled round the lips of one who in days gone by had never opened them to me, save to utter flattering speeches or honeyed words.

"You dare be present at a meeting of the Secret Society! You dare pretend to save one justly condemned! Know that you are yourself doomed," and quick as lightning a long, sharp knife glittered in his upraised hand.

The steel just grazed my forehead, as I was dashed to the ground, dragging another victim upon me in my fall. A deep, hollow groan; a hideous stream of blood, and then, as if the demons of this awful Pandemonium had been let loose upon us, yells and curses rent the air. The doors were dashed inwards, a sudden rush of men poured into the hall. Blows and shrieks resounded on every side; strong men were hurled backwards, and cast to the ground by the powerful force brought against them. Women fought like demons, but were remorselessly shot, or cut down by the sword. But few minutes elapsed ere the whole band was overpowered. Not a man escaped, and then Serge — yes, Serge — came to me, no longer my servant, but now arrayed in gorgeous uniform, the officer in command of the attacking party. The keen, searching eyes seemed yet more keen, as they looked resolutely and fiercely around. The firmly closed mouth, the square, strong jaw, now seen, made the features I had once thought vacant, appear stern, severe, and implacable.

"A carriage awaits you, madame," he said, as he raised me from the ground, "and an escort through the forest will ensure your safety. You will pardon the deception I was forced to practise in order to unearth this nest of assassins and traitors. Without your unconscious aid we could not have made the necessary arrests. This great duty compelled me,

though most reluctantly, to deceive you. By taking the place of your servant, and so *selling* you into the power of my *friend* Count Perètekoff," — and here he laughed a low, cruel laugh, — "I was enabled to take these wretches red-handed, and so ensure the fate they have so long richly deserved."

While he spoke, the prisoners were being removed, and at this moment Count Xavier Perètekoff, heavily manacled, blackened with smoke, and still bleeding from the many wounds he had received during the desperate struggle, was being forced from the room.

He turned, ere his captors could drag him through the doorway, and raising his shackled hands, shook them at his wife and myself with an expression of savage hate, that will remain with me to my dying day.

"Fool and coward," he said, "may you die the death you so well merit — and I — I curse myself for having been such a miserable fool as to trust a woman."

Even as he spoke, another prisoner, a yet more hideous object than himself, from bleeding wounds and from impotent fury, in whom nought told of woman save the long hair streaming down her back, pressed a little forward, and whispered in his ear. It was the *dame de compagnie*, Tatjana Andreovna Durska.

"Yes, yes," he muttered, "you perhaps are faithful. Faithful," he added with a grim laugh, "for we shall share the gallows and the hangman, or, still worse, the mine."

I turned to Serge.

"I cannot go," I said resolutely, "without my dear companion and servant; nor can I at present leave my poor friend, who is, I fear, severely wounded."

I was kneeling upon the ground, and supporting the head of my unhappy and unconscious Nadine.

"Poor wretch!" Serge replied, looking carelessly at the miserable object before him. "She has been only a tool, and a victim. These traitors have long suspected her, and but for her wealth, which they could not get at without her aid, would ere this have accomplished her death. But they have tortured her into silence and submission. Her heart was good, and she was faithful to our father, the czar. Still it is better as it is. Justice could not now have spared her."

Oh, merciful Heaven! how that graceful, beautiful creature had been tortured! How maimed and lacerated was that once exquisite form!

It needed not much skill to see that life was now ebbing fast. Her sorrows and her pains were now fast drawing to a close.

Each breath sent the life-blood rushing from the gaping wound she had received in saving my life. The convulsive sob with which she drew this breath, the slowly glazing eyes, said that death was very near.

I raised her poor head. I pressed her against my heart. I kissed the suffering face, over which the grey shadow of the last moment was now fast descending.

The fading eyes sought mine. The pallid lips quivered, and she struggled to speak.

"My Lina," she faintly murmured, "God be praised! I die in loving arms. This — this is rest."

But even as she spoke a sudden terror came upon her. She started in wild alarm.

"For God's dear sake, a priest!" she cried, "a priest to hear my confession. To absolve me from my great sins!"

The crimson stream poured fast from her lips — she sank back gasping and suffocated by the strangling blood.

Again I raised her, signing to Serge to hold before her, so that her dying eyes might rest upon them, the little image and crucifix that every Russian soldier carries over his heart.

The lips quivered yet more weakly, slowly and faintly came the word, —

"Forgive —"

A quick convulsion passed over the livid features. A sharp spasm shook the hitherto motionless limbs. Again the blood rushed in a purple torrent from her mouth. A momentary but desperate struggle for breath, and then one of the most beautiful and gifted women I have ever known lay dead upon the floor of her own hall, a victim to the cruel and selfish ambition of the man to whom she had given everything.

Serge would not permit longer delay. He hurried me from the ghastly scene, where the body of my unhappy friend was only one amongst the many dreadful objects that lay around.

A carriage was in waiting, in which had already been placed my poor Sarah, still insensible from the effects of the poisonous narcotics that had been administered to her.

Scarcely had I taken my seat, than the horses started at a hand-gallop. A detachment of dragoons closed around, and by the faint light of the dawn that was now gleaming palely between the stunted trees

of the forest, we were rapidly borne away from the spot where I had passed hours of such infinite agony—a night so infinitely terrible.

ANDREE HOPE.

From The Spectator.

#### AN OLD FRENCH HOUSE.

##### II.

AFTER the death of the young Marquis de C—, his mother's existence became less solitary, though not less formal, than it had been in his lifetime. Her aunt, the old Marquise de B—, came to live with her; her cousin, the Comtesse d'O—, paid her long visits; a few old friends, models of propriety, came often to stay with her. Sometimes younger friends and relations ventured for a few days into the stately precincts of G—, brought by that strong family affection and dutifulness which is so large a part of French character. And these young people must have needed all their principle to support life at all in such a freezing atmosphere. The rigid punctuality of the house, for instance, directed by old servants with whom no one dared to find fault, must have been almost beyond the attainment of ordinary mortals. You might be out walking in the woods on an enchanting day in spring; the free country outside those walls, the distractions of wild flowers, might have made you linger a little longer than was prudent. Then, as you were turning in at one of the park gates, still a long way from the château, the dinner-bell would begin to ring at half past five, and you would know that you had committed one of the unpardonable sins,—you were late for dinner. You might hurry back and rush into the château by a back door; but nothing could save you now. When you came down the great white staircase, you could see through an open door the party sitting at dinner unconscious of you. You went in and took your place; no one looked up or seemed to perceive your entrance; there was a dead silence, which made the bravest culprit tremble with nervousness. In a few minutes, probably, the talk was resumed; but nobody addressed the late comer. You were in disgrace for the whole evening, though you might be thirty or forty years old.

Madame de C— was not rich, and she was extremely charitable, so that the state kept up at G— was a very different thing from what it had been in the

days before the Revolution. She had, in fact, only about £1,500 a year; but such an income, to this day, goes very much farther in France than in England. She had a first-rate man cook, two *valets de chambre*,—each of these, one must remember, housemaid, butler, and footman rolled into one, and doing three times the work of an Englishman. There were also two or three maids in the house, a dairy-maid, a coachman, a gardener, a game-keeper, and five or six men under them. The daily life of the mistress of the house began at six every morning, when she got up and went to mass at the church in the town. After that, she visited the poor, and the little hospital she had built, which was entirely supported by her. She was back at the château before the church clock struck ten; its last stroke was immediately followed by the breakfast bell, and then, for what reason I do not know, the church clock struck the hour a second time. After breakfast, the marquise and her guests went into the salon, cold and bare as it has been described, its only relics of splendor being the very fine family portraits, and the beautiful carving of the panelled walls. Here the ladies were all obliged to sit at needlework till two o'clock; and the men staying in the château, if they were well behaved, sat there too, and entertained the ladies; but, not unnaturally, they very often found this too much for them, and escaped to the outer world. At two the morning's bondage ended; people scattered and did what they pleased. Madame de C— went to her own affairs; sometimes she took a drive with one or two congenial spirits. After dinner, which was at half past five, the poor ladies sat down again to their needlework, the rebellious men escaping to smoke, if they could manage it without being found out, for one can easily understand that smoking was not a practice encouraged at G—. At nine o'clock, the whole party played a round game, and this lasted till the clock struck ten, when the marquise wished her friends good-night. Then they all lighted the candles in their flat candlesticks, and set off to bed.

All this sounds dismal enough, but the place and the life had their redeeming features too. The house had a kind of historic grandeur and beauty mingled with its sadness,—for certainly it was sad; the shadow of its mistress's sorrow hanging over it like a cloud. Yet the talk was often most cheerful and agreeable, as it could not fail to be among well-bred French people, and the warm sun shone on



the great white walls, and streamed into the high rooms, and along the broad red corridors hung with pictures of the past. Outside, too, the place had its beauty; on the south terrace were two rows of fine, bushy orange-trees, tall and stately like the house; and in the park below, green and bright and shady, the long avenues of trees seemed to lead to unknown distances; they, and the beautiful mysterious *charmilles* in full foliage, seemed like the approaches to some hidden fairy palace. Then, not all Madame de C——'s friends and companions were of the same ascetic spirit as herself. The younger guests at the château used to fly for sympathy and amusement to the oldest person in the house, who yet was the youngest and merriest, the Marquise de B——. In her little apartment at one end of the château, she used to sit and tell her stories, recollections of her long life, which would have been quite impossible in the drawing-room, in the hearing of Madame de C——. Her father was an Austrian noble, and she had royal blood in her veins. About the year 1785, he enraged his family by falling in love with France and a French lady, gave up a brilliant marriage they had arranged for him, bought large estates in France, and wished to spend the rest of his life there. But the Revolution interfered with that. He and his wife were living in Paris with their little girl, who was about four years old. One day she was sent out driving in her mother's *berline*, with servants to take care of her, when the carriage was stopped by a mob, who seized the little girl, perched her on the car of the Goddess of Reason, and drove her about all day in triumph. The little lady herself enjoyed this adventure immensely; but it was too much for her father and mother. Having got their child back, which they did not succeed in doing till the next day, they immediately left Paris, and took refuge at the court of Hungary, where their child was brought up; and many stories, more amusing than edifying, she had to tell of her young days. In the end, she married a French *émigré*, the Marquis de B——, and so came back to France. They succeeded in getting back some part of their property, but had very little money. Madame de B—— used to tell that, after her arrival in her husband's half-ruined château, she had been trying to find a woman as cook, at very low wages, when one day an oldish man came to offer himself. She answered: "Impossible; nous sommes ruinés, et je ne cherche qu'une

très modeste *cuisinière*. Je ne pourrais pas payer un cuisinier." "Oh, madame la Marquise," said the man, "j'ai été le cuisinier de Madame Dubarry, et je ne pense pas me résigner à entrer dans une maison ordinaire. Si vous voulez me prendre, j'aime mieux vous servir sans gages!"

Madame de B—— had lost her husband and two sons, and was left alone in the world, before she came to live with her niece; but she had not lost her wit and fun, or her love of the world and its ways, and she certainly was a foreign element in the Château de G——. While she lived there, it was at least possible to laugh; and the young relations perhaps found the old aunt's stories not less delightful because they were stolen pleasures, like smoking, quite shut out from the great rooms down-stairs.

But I must not linger on these recollections of days which look actually bright in contrast with the deeper twilight that followed them. Madame de B—— died a very old woman, lively and charming to the last. The old friends passed away one by one, leaving the marquise much more lonely, and then, the last great trouble of her life, came the war of 1870. A battle was fought close by, the little town was occupied, and the Prussian general quartered himself and his officers in the château, with his artillery in the park. The poor marquise, though treated afterwards with great respect, received a shock on the first day which she never recovered. The first soldier who entered the château took her roughly by the shoulders and pushed her aside. She was able and ready, however, to devote herself to the care of the wounded, and when the Germans had left, taking her horses with them, she turned the house into a hospital. She also nursed the many victims of the small-pox, which broke out with great violence towards the end of the war. A faithful friend who came to her as soon as the state of the country would allow, found her strangely changed from her former self. Her spirit was broken, the old sternness and stiffness were gone, and she had become quite gentle and affectionate. But all the old life was over; each year as it went by, as the marquise gradually failed in body and mind, seemed sadder to those who went there to visit and watch over her.

A visit to G—— in winter, —it was something formidable of its kind. As I have said, the place was remote from railroads; and this visit began with a drive

of more than thirty miles, twelve miles of which went straight through one of the forests of that country. And a drive through such a forest in summer is beautiful and charming enough; but in the dark, grey winter, it is a very dreary experience. The carriage hardly ever met a single living thing; a stray huntsman, perhaps, or a party of woodcutters, or a frightened deer rushing into a thicket. And then G— himself, — the old servants dead or in second childhood, their mistress failing fast, the doors in the corridor all shut, the damp alleys of the park deserted. Cold winds blew straight through the house, which stands on a hill, and it required some courage to come out of one's room, wrapped in shawls, and walk along the freezing, silent passages, and down to the great empty halls below, where immense wood fires blazing up the chimneys only seemed, in some mysterious way, to make the house more lonely still.

It is all over now. G— has passed into other and younger hands; the marquise is at rest. Perhaps, when another century has gone by, another chapter in the history of the old house — more or less eventful, who knows? — may be told from another memory. E.

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From The Saturday Review.

#### INCIDENTS OF THE EARTHQUAKE.

THE earthquake on the western Riviera will be always memorable for the opportunities it gave of studying the contagion of fear among educated people. Most persons are as unwilling to acknowledge that they are without presence of mind as that they are without a sense of humor; and, when all is going on well and smoothly, we are apt to think that there is something savage in panic, something, at any rate, only partly civilized, and more proper to the unwashed stratum of society than to our superior selves. But, alas! that shaking on Ash Wednesday morning threw the thousands and tens of thousands of winter visitors to the sunny south into a state of utter terror which sent them flying in all directions, when a moment's calm thought would have enabled them to see that, for their own comfort and convenience, they would in most instances have done much better to stay where they were. Serious earthquakes do sometimes come in pairs; Canton was convulsed on the 26th and 27th of May, 1830; Peru and Ecuador suffered on August 13-15, 1868,

and San José de Cucuta, with all the neighboring towns, was destroyed on May 16-18, 1875. Still, these are exceptions to a very general rule, and there was no real reason to expect that the severe shocks of February 23rd would be repeated on the following day, or after. Of course, where houses and hotels were rendered actually uninhabitable the inmates had no choice but to decamp; but this was not invariably, or even usually, the case. It must be owned that life on the Riviera is not bracing to the nerves. The pure pursuit of health or of pleasure was never supposed to make heroes; and then there is all the rest — the sun, the orange-trees, the blue, tideless sea, the *far niente*, the small talk of the *table d'hôte*, the suspension of all active duties, of all habitual obligations — what wonder if the sum total produce enervation? Then, too, there was the sense of absolute security. As a matter of fact, the Genoese coast experienced a sharp earthquake in 1819, and from very ancient times the peasants have believed that the so-called Monte Nero, which rises behind Ospedaletti, is an undeveloped volcano. But confidence was the order of the day, and any one who in the last hours of the carnival had hinted at a Ligurian Casamicciola would have been laughed to scorn. So everything combined to heighten the effect of the awakening, and, obedient to the first uncontrollable impulse of fear, the tens of thousands fled.

Meanwhile, in the little mountain villages where for the most part not one tourist has ever set foot, the real sufferers were beginning to count up their dead, and bring aid, if haply aid might be brought, to their wounded or dying. The earthquake had left erring Monte Carlo with hardly a stone displaced, to wreck ruin on these humble homes, on these pious folk, the majority of whom were engaged in saying their prayers. Some very serious damage was done in several of the less frequented of the coast towns, notably at Porto Maurizio; but the great calamities were reserved for the adjacent village of Diano Marina, and the small mountain hamlets of Bussana, Baiardo, Castellaro, Ceriana, San Romolo, Taggia Alta — names unknown to English travellers, with the exception of Taggia, where many English pilgrims have gone to see the house of the Signora Eleonora in "Dr. Antonio" — the house where Ruffini's mother, the original of that beautiful character, lived, and where Ruffini himself died two or three years ago. It is now a heap

of ruins. It was strange to see at Taggia on the crumbling walls scraps of the hand-bills which the previous day had invited the *belle ragazze* to the rustic carnival dance.

At Diano Marina the dead amounted to two hundred and fifty. The unfortunate fishing village lies now amongst its cactuses and rich southern vegetation with the quiet sea washing its shore — a picture of desolation. Most of the men were away in their boats, so that the victims were chiefly women and children. The survivors, who have lost their all, are calm and do not beg; they hide even their tears from the gaze of the curious. Here and elsewhere the behavior of the Ligurian population in the midst of this sore trial has been admirable. The cases of theft and pillage which often disgrace humanity on such occasions have been almost absent, and almost everywhere the people have worked nobly at the perilous task of searching for the wounded and discovering the dead. Many lives have been lost in attempts at rescue. At Diano an old Garibaldian named Bono was killed in this way; in another place six members of a rescue party were crushed to death. Needless to say that the conduct of the military despatched from Genoa to assist in the work of mercy was beyond all praise. Once or twice there was some difficulty in persuading the peasants to help in burying their poor dead in the rough and ready fashion which alone was possible. At Baiardo, a village cradled among snow-capped mountains nearly three thousand feet above the sea, where the victims numbered two hundred and twenty-six, it was necessary to threaten a general cremation to induce the people to place the bodies in the two monster graves dug for their reception. One poor woman, who had dragged what was left of her husband to her house, absolutely refused to part with it until a rude coffin had been knocked together so as to give it the honors of a separate burial. At Castellaro, a hamlet of eight hundred souls, situated on a mule-track above Taggia, high mass was being said, and the old priest was reciting the last prayers at the altar, when he heard a tremendous noise, and instinctively he rushed out by the door leading to the presbytery. "Afterwards, signore," he said, when relating his experience, "oh! afterwards —" a burst of sobbing stopped his utterance; presently he added, "I had baptised them all; I looked upon them as my children, and they were dead, all at once!" A few of

the men had escaped by taking refuge under the arches of the side altars, the rest were crushed by the roof falling in, which happened instantaneously. The priest scrambled on to the ruined stones, and cried in a loud voice, "My children, trust in God's mercy. I absolve you all *in articulo mortis*." At Baiardo the church fell at the moment when the priest was distributing the ashes, according to custom on Ash Wednesday. Three hundred were buried. Some days after some women were seen kneeling on the road which overlooks the cemetery of Baiardo; when asked what they were about, one old dame replied simply, "Preguoma pei morti nostri; me figgieu è là." (We pray for our dead; my son is there.) At Pompeiana the safety of the inhabitants was due to their being in church; for the three aisles were solidly constructed, and resisted, while the hamlet was reduced to ruins. At Apricale and at Ceriana the churches fell in; but no one was hurt, because, in the one case, the priest had been suddenly sent for to take the viaticum to a dying person, and all his congregation had followed him to form part of the procession, and, in the other, mass had been deferred, the *parroco* having to perform a funeral. At Bussana, where, unlike most of the places, the people were too terror-stricken to help in the rescue, which was effected solely by soldiers, several people were got out alive after a confinement of two or three days. A mother and daughter thus rescued thought that they had been immured for only half a day. A young man, who had lain quite naked for two days and a half in a narrow but secure crevice, was hardly freed when he sprang to his feet, and when offered a bottle of wine exclaimed eagerly, "Is it for me?" On receiving an answer in the affirmative, he swallowed most of the contents. In a house in the same village were found beneath the ruins two brothers clasped in a last embrace. Only the hand of one of them had been left uncovered. These brothers had a little tame sparrow; the shock of the earthquake opened its cage, so that the bird, flying forth, escaped in safety. There it was, perched on the outstretched hand of its dead master.

At Ceriana a poor man, who earned his living as a milk-carrier, was supposed to have gone on his ordinary rounds, on which he started at four o'clock in the morning. No one, therefore, thought of inquiring about him; but the fact was that, having taken a glass or two of wine in honor of the carnival, he had overslept

himself, and was still asleep when his cottage fell down upon him. He had a large dog, which drew the little cart bearing the milk up the mountain paths, and the dog by chance was outside and safe. He found out where his master lay, and succeeded in clearing the masonry so as to uncover his head, which was bleeding. He then set to work to lick the wounds; but, seeing that they went on bleeding, and also that he could not liberate the rest of the body, he started in search of help, running up and down among the surrounding ruins till he met some one whom he caught hold of by the clothes. The man, however, thought the dog was mad, and fled for his life. Luckily another man guessed the truth, and allowed himself to be guided to the spot. Thus the poor milk-carrier was saved, and the ex-minister of public works, Signor Genala, paid a visit to him where he lay, under a tent, with his head bound up and his dog stretched by his side.

Signor Genala, it may be added, won the hearts of these unhappy people by his prompt arrival on the scene, and by the obstinacy with which he insisted on visiting all the most dangerous places, where the walls were still falling. He is a young man, a native of Cremona; it is not many years since we heard him make his maiden speech at Monte Citorio. His gallant conduct has been much appreciated by the country and by the king, who, dauntless himself, is a keen admirer of personal courage in others.

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From Chambers' Journal.

#### JUBILEE YEARS.

EIGHTEEN hundred and eighty-seven will be a year of jubilees. Among the things which will see their fifty years' life between now and Christmas, and which have proved of immense advantage to the community, will be the practical application of electricity as a means of communication, the introduction of phonography by Isaac Pitman, and the establishing of building societies. Concerning the utility of these to the nation, or in the case of the two first-named it might be said, respecting their usefulness to the entire world, that it is scarcely necessary to write a single word, their advantages to the human race being so well known. By means of the electric telegraph, the antipodes is practically brought within speaking distance of our shores; Pitman's phonog-

raphy has revolutionized the newspaper press; and building societies have proved of immense benefit to the thrifty among the working classes. The jubilee of these will no doubt be fittingly celebrated during the present year; but *the* jubilee for which 1887 will be remembered in English history will be the completion of the fifty years' reign of Queen Victoria.

A royal jubilee is not an every-day occurrence, and hitherto only three of England's monarchs have lived to rule for fifty years over the nation — namely, Henry III., who sat on the throne for fifty-six years; Edward III., who lived for six months after completing his jubilee; and George III., who reigned for sixty years.

Because, therefore, of its rarity, a sovereign's jubilee is always made the occasion of general rejoicing. Respecting the celebration of Henry's fifty years' rule, very little is recorded; but concerning that of Edward we learn that "he laid hold of that era as the occasion of his performing many popular acts of government; that he had given orders to issue out general and special pardons without paying any fees, for recalling all exiles, and setting at liberty all debtors to the crown and all prisoners for political matters. The Parliament, on their parts, not to be wanting in gratitude, having obtained their petitions, on the day of their rising presented the king with a duty of twenty-six shillings and eightpence upon every sack of wool for three years, besides continuing the former duties upon wools, fells, and skins. This year (1377), being a year of jubilee, was spent in hunting throughout the great forests of England, and other magnificent diversions, in which the king laid out an immense sum."

By reason of the progress of civilization, and the consequent facilities for chronicling important events — slow though they were — particulars as to how the jubilee of George III. was celebrated are more plentiful than in the case of either of the sovereigns to which we have referred. How best to celebrate King George's fifty years' reign caused no little concern to his Majesty's subjects. The occasion was indeed an auspicious one, for a like occurrence had not taken place in England for nearly four and a half centuries. As may be imagined, suggestions almost without number were made as to what would be the most fitting manner in which to celebrate so interesting and rare an event. Among the proposals made was one which sounds somewhat droll to our minds — it was that each loyal citizen of London

should attire himself in Windsor uniform on the day of jubilee; and that the ladies should array themselves in dresses of royal-blue velvet or satin, and should bedeck their headdresses with devices emblematical of the occasion. When we consider the grotesque appearance which the streets would have presented had the suggestion been carried out, we can hardly suppress a smile at the absurd idea, though the proposal appears to have been brought forward in all earnestness, and to have been received with the utmost soberness.

Among the suggestions which were carried into practice was one—as is customary on the occasion of incidents of national interest—that a medal should be struck to commemorate the event. This bears on the obverse a bust of the king, together with his title and the dates of his accession and jubilee—October 25, 1760, and October 25, 1809, respectively. On the reverse is a representation of England as fame seated on clouds and triumphing over mortality. There is likewise a throne, illuminated by rays from heaven, and a centenary circle, one half of which shows the duration of his Majesty's reign up to that period.

The imprisonment of debtors for small liabilities was at that time a pressing social evil. The *Morning Post* drew attention to the matter, and suggested that the best way of celebrating the king's jubilee would be for the residents in London to subscribe a sufficient sum of money to release the persons confined for debt in the City. The debtors were some seventy-two in number, and their liabilities amounted to a little more than two thousand pounds. The proposal met with hearty approval; and the necessary amount was speedily subscribed. In other parts of the country the same suggestion was acted upon; and his Majesty was so much in favor of the scheme, that he gave two thousand pounds out of his privy purse for the release of poor debtors in England and Wales, the distribution of the money being intrusted to the Society for the Relief of Persons confined for Small Debts. He likewise appropriated one thousand pounds for a similar purpose in Scotland, and one thousand pounds in Ireland, out of funds remaining at his disposal.

His Majesty further signalized his fifty years' rule by other gracious acts; for instance, he granted a free pardon to all deserters from the army and navy, without the severe condition usually attendant thereon of serving upon the most odious

stations; and all persons confined for military offences were released. He likewise granted the officers of the army and navy a general brevet promotion; that of the navy consisting of five admirals, ten vice-admirals, ten rear-admirals, twenty post-captains, and twenty commanders, all being taken in regular succession from the top of their respective lists. Persons imprisoned for debts due to the crown were also released, except those whose cases were distinguished by peculiar circumstances of violence or fraud, as well as all instances of official delinquency; the latter exception being made on account of a determination arrived at by his Majesty never to screen from punishment those who had abused the power derived from him to the injury of his subjects. All prisoners of war hitherto on parole were permitted to return to their own countries, except the French, who were debarred the privilege because of the unparalleled severity of their ruler in detaining all British subjects in France.

The nation generally gave vent to its loyalty on the occasion of the king's jubilee, and high festival was held throughout the country, the Englishman's characteristic of celebrating important or interesting events by feasting being extremely prominent. In the metropolis there were municipal pageants, splendid illuminations, and abundant feasting. The lord mayor (Sir Charles Flower) proceeded in state to a thanksgiving service at St. Paul's; and salutes of artillery, fired by regular troops and by corps of volunteers, went on for a great part of the day. Treats were given to the inmates of the various charitable institutions, and innumerable private hospitalities took place. Services were held at the Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish places of worship; and perhaps the most touching incident connected with these was that witnessed in the Jewish synagogue, where a sermon was preached from Leviticus xxv. 13: "In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man into his possession." The whole of the twenty-first Psalm was afterwards sung to the tune of "God Save the King."

Windsor, the royal borough, was the scene of great rejoicings. As early as six o'clock in the morning the sound of trumpets was heard; and later in the day the bells of the various churches rang merry peals, and a parade of household troops, militia, and volunteers took place. Between eight and nine o'clock, the king, queen, and members of the royal family



attended service in the private chapel; and subsequently, the queen, Princess Elizabeth, and others, drove to Frogmore to inspect the preparations for a fête, on their way passing under triumphal arches and between lines of soldiers. The fête, which was held in the evening, was given by the queen, and was attended by a select circle of guests. At one o'clock the queen, with a brilliant retinue, and the mayor and corporation of Windsor, walked to the Bachelors' Acre—a large piece of vacant ground near the centre of the town—where an ox and some sheep were roasting whole, the former having been put on the spit at two o'clock in the morning, so that it might be cooked by one in the afternoon. The royal party were received by fifty bachelors, who conducted them to the fire at which the ox was roasting, after which they inspected the culinary arrangements. The butchers who had charge of the cooking of the ox and sheep, the latter of which were put on the fire at nine o'clock, and were stuffed with potatoes, were (shade of Beau Brummell!) dressed in blue frocks and silk stockings. When the animals were ready, they were distributed among the crowd in the presence of the royal party, who were offered and graciously accepted the first slices, the same being served up to them on silver plates by the butchers and bachelors. Afterwards, the distinguished company were entertained to a private banquet; and subsequently they returned to the castle. Of course, rejoicings of this character would at that time have been incomplete without the old English sport of bull-baiting being indulged in, and accordingly we find that this barbarous diversion was provided for the afternoon's entertainment. In the course of the day, fifty pieces of cannon were discharged in Windsor Park, and there was a royal inspection of troops and great *feu de joie* in the Long Walk. At night the town was brilliantly illuminated. The fête at Frogmore was a grand affair, and the pyrotechnic display on the banks of the lake at the conclusion of the rejoicings was very fine. Among the illuminated structures was an elegant Grecian temple, which, we are told, was "erected on a mount surrounded by eight beautiful marble pillars. The interior of the temple was lined with purple, and in the centre was a large transparency of the Eye of Providence, fixed as it were upon a portrait of his Majesty, surmounted by stars of lamps." Tea and coffee were served in marquees, and supper was provided in the dining-rooms at midnight.

We also learn that at the close of the fireworks display "two cars or chariots drawn by seahorses, in one of which was a figure representing Britannia, in the other a representative of Neptune, appeared majestically moving on the bosom of the lake, followed by four boats filled with persons dressed to represent Tritons, etc. These last were to have been composed of choristers, who were to have sung 'God Save the King' on the water, but, unfortunately, the crowd assembled was so immense, that those who were to have sung could not gain entrance."

Like celebrations took place in the various towns throughout the country, the proceedings in each instance to a great extent necessarily resembling each other. The day was generally observed as a national holiday; and in almost all corporate towns a civic procession to the church or cathedral was one of the chief features of the occasion; whilst in those places in which military were stationed, numerous volleys were fired by the soldiers in honor of the event. Feasting was indulged in to an enormous extent by all classes, the poor being entertained by their more wealthy neighbors; and the inauguration of charitable institutions and benevolent societies was a characteristic of the jubilee. In keeping with the custom of the times, ox-roastings took place all over the country; and "good old ale" was distributed with the greatest lavishness. In rural districts, most of the nobility and gentry kept open house, and provided entertainments for their poorer neighbors; employers feasted their servants, and "the king, and long life to him," was toasted with the utmost enthusiasm throughout the land. Dancing was carried on upon the village green; and balls, bonfires, and pyrotechnic displays concluded the rejoicings of a day on which high and low, rich and poor, had vied with each other in showing loyalty to their sovereign.

This was the last royal jubilee witnessed in England. But on the 20th June next, fifty years will have elapsed since our present ruler, then a girl of eighteen, ascended the throne; and how most fitly to celebrate the event is a problem which is at present perturbing the minds of various classes of her Majesty's subjects both at home and abroad. Within living memory, "the days of fifty years ago, when George the Third was king," were thought of and sung about as the best in our annals. But to-day a different opinion prevails; for it is acknowledged by all that the glo-

ries of the Georgian era are surpassed by those of the Victorian, in which the development and practical application of science to our arts and industries, the extension of popular liberties, and the spread of education, have revolutionized the nation's commerce, and wrought a vast improvement in the social condition of her Majesty's subjects. There can therefore be no doubt that the people over whom Queen Victoria has reigned so gloriously will celebrate her jubilee in a manner worthy of the occasion, and will be equally as ready to show their loyalty to the sovereign under whose sway England has attained a pre-eminent position among the nations of the world, as were the subjects of George III., "the father of his people."

From The Spectator.

#### THE SUFFERINGS OF THE CLERGY.

It will not be a matter of surprise to those who know the present position of the country clergy, that their manifold troubles in consequence of the agricultural depression have at last found a voice.\* The squires are estimated to have lost thirty per cent. of their income in the last ten years, the farmers sixty per cent., and the laborers ten per cent. The clergy stand in a different position from any of them, and must rank next the farmer in the extent of their loss. The position of the clergy differs from the position of the other sufferers in this, — that there are very heavy calls upon their incomes which, though they do not amount to charges, must be paid, and, in fact, have been paid, except in the most exceptional cases, during the whole period. Such outgoings as the stipends of curates, the conduct of the services of the Church, the repair of chancels, the support of schools, the maintenance of local clubs and societies, and the administration of charities, have been loyally paid by the clergy, even when they hardly knew where to turn for the necessities of life. The clergyman's is the only income which is and must be spent in and for the parish. It is infinitely to the credit of the clergy that they have often preferred to starve themselves rather than to starve the spiritual agencies which had been started in better times for the benefit of the people. The clergy have

endured — we wish we could say passed through — the ordeal with a dignified, and very often, if truth were known, courageous and pathetic, silence. And because they have been silent, it is naturally assumed in an agitating and agitated world that things were not very bad with them after all. Indeed, it would not take long to find politicians who would tell one that the clergy were the fattest of middlemen and the worst of landlords. But it is time that the state of the clergy whose income depends upon agriculture should be thoroughly considered by the country, and especially by those who, from whatever point of view, are desirous of maintaining an Established Church.

The spokesman of the clergy is not one of themselves. Mr. R. E. Prothero, who undertook to make an inquiry into the subject for the editor of the *Guardian*, and whose letters to that paper are now reprinted in pamphlet form, is a fellow of All Souls' college, Oxford, and a layman; but by reason of his connection with many of the clergy, by going to the best sources of information, and by the personal investigation he has made, he has produced a most valuable authority upon the present condition of things with regard to tithes and glebe. His inquiry was, indeed, mainly confined to "the districts in which the prolonged depression was known to have produced its most disastrous results." So that the readers of this pamphlet may feel safe in saying that they know the worst, though the evidence is not so reliable as to the extent of the area of the evil. We are glad to say that Mr. Prothero has not yielded to the temptation of "highly spiced literature," and does not pose either as his own or any one else's "special commissioner." His statements are probably not the less accurate on that account. "Abstract statements possess at least one advantage, — they preserve the incognito of those who have only given information on the distinct understanding that names shall not be directly or indirectly divulged." Identification would mean loss of credit, the last straw in many cases.

Clerical incomes from agricultural property are derived from tithes and glebe. Mr. Prothero treats them separately; but in the present case the result to the clergy is the same. In the case of tithes, the question is complicated by political agitation and sectarian hatred. It is as hard to convince the Welsh Calvinist of the fact that tithe rests on the same title as any other property, as it is to convince

\* The Agricultural Depression, and the Sufferings of the Clergy. By R. E. Prothero, Fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford. London: *Guardian* Office.

the English farmer that, though he hands the money to the parson, he does not in reality pay the tithe. The question of tithe is really a question between the landowner and the tithe-owner, not between the tithe-owner and the farmer. If tithe were abolished to-morrow, within ten years it would all go into the landlord's pocket in the shape of increased rent; and hard as it is to convince the English farmer of this, it lies at the basis of the whole question. We heartily concur with Mr. Prothero in thinking that the alliance between landowners and tenants in the agitation against tithe would be "short-sighted, if not actually dishonest." It would be foolish, because the same sort of agitation is equally capable of being used against the landlords themselves. It would be dishonest, because, whatever may be the ignorance of the tenant farmers, the landowners know perfectly well that they "bought their land at a less price because it was subject to tithe; they never purchased or acquired the rent-charge; it can be no grievance for them to pay what never belonged to them; it is no hardship not to receive interest on capital which they have not invested. Their successors inherit what their predecessors bought, neither more nor less; they are in exactly the same position with respect to the charge, neither better nor worse." As to the present position of clerical tithe-owners, it is "painful to the extreme. They are dependent upon bankrupts for their bread. Their position as spiritual advisers is seriously compromised when they at the same time appear as creditors pressing struggling tenants for the payment of tithe."

The glebe-owner is still worse off than the tithe-owner. He suffers "more than the corresponding losses of landowners." He is accused of being a bad landlord; but the reason is not so much in himself as in the law, which practically forbids him to give his tenant any security of occupation, which weights him with dilapidations, but does not compel him to work the land in a husbandlike manner, and which finally renders it absolutely impossible that at death or resignation, either he or his representatives should be able to get back a penny of any capital he may have spent on the land. Thus, the practical summary of the glebe-owner's position is that he gets the worst tenants, and that his interest is to spend as little as he can on the land. In recent years, many landholders have saved their estates to themselves and their children by bold but

judicious expenditure of capital during the period of depression. But an incumbent cannot benefit his family, and rarely benefits himself, by expending capital on the land. Only one instance has Mr. Prothero found of a clergyman who has successfully farmed his own land so as to make it pay for the time being, and even in this case he can never get back the capital he has expended. It will surprise, and we think it should command the respect of the public to learn, that in spite of this, in the diocese of Peterborough alone, £75,000 was spent between 1870-80 on the improvement of farms and buildings, of which £37,000 was *private capital* sunk in the land without any prospect of seeing the capital again, and, as things have turned out, without even getting the interest. The private capital sunk for the same purpose since 1870 in the Peterborough diocese alone now amounts to £50,000, and it is probable that as much as £150,000 has been expended in the whole country. This large expenditure, though at the most it has been of only temporary benefit to the clergy, and a loss fearful to contemplate to their families, has immensely benefited the property of the Church, and the clergy deserve to get the credit of it. To understand the position the clergy are actually in, take the following, which we know, from other sources than Mr. Prothero, accurately to describe the state of things in many cases:—

All the temporal advantages of the clerical profession are, at least in the midland counties, entirely removed. The clergy feel the pinch of poverty, not, perhaps, in its acutest form of actual hunger, but in the loss of all those so-called luxuries which in their position and surroundings are really necessities. First came inconvenience from delay and uncertainty in the receipt of income; then the humiliating necessity of asking for credit; then the certainty that rents would not be paid; then the pressure of creditors and the refusal to give further credit; then the expenditure of private capital and the mortgage of life insurances; then the application to friends. The house and its surroundings are ill-adapted to a constantly narrowing income. The outdoor establishment is reduced, the garden cannot be maintained, the horse and carriage are sold. The same process is followed indoors. Servant after servant is discharged till not one is left; then follows the careful husbanding of fuel, the severest practice of domestic economy, even the disposal of books, furniture, and apparel. . . . The Church services must be maintained, and the curate's salary is paid by an incumbent who envies his subordinate his salary. . . . No one will give more than the parson, and the clergy are still obliged to

head subscriptions. . . . The parson is often the only man of education in the parish; he cannot seek the society of his friends, for he has no means of locomotion; he cannot solace himself with books, for he can no longer afford to buy them, or even to subscribe to a library; he cannot, like the squire, shut up his house and leave the neighborhood. He has no fellow-sufferer with whom he can compare notes; the farmers may understand his loss, but their well-meant sympathy is often expressed with excruciating frankness; the laborers grumble that he cannot employ them as he used, and is less able to minister to their wants.

This is a sad picture enough, and is far away removed from the ideal picture of the country parsonage. Mr. Prothero proposes remedies which we are not going to discuss at present. The redemption of the tithe rent-charge seems feasible. The alteration of the law in order to put the clergy in a better position with regard to the tenant might easily be effected, and we believe that a bill is about to be introduced in the House of Commons for that purpose, backed by Mr. Childers and Mr. J. G. Talbot. The sale of glebe lands is a more difficult and complex question, and we are by no means favorably impressed with Lord Cross's bill on the subject. The

redemption of the mortgages of the land improvement companies by public subscription in order to prevent the disendowment by foreclosure, a fate which has already overtaken one living, and "hangs by a thread" over others, would be an excellent object, if the public were not already sick of jubilee subscriptions. What we wish to point out is the great necessity and the great suffering which have come upon the clergy. What we wish to impress upon the public is that "the turn is still out of sight," that "there is every reason to believe that the year 1886 will prove the most disastrous of a series of ruinous seasons." In fine, that the clergy have not only clung to their posts, but borne their heavy trust with an uncomplaining dignity which is worthy of their noble calling. Every temporal advantage of their position is disappearing; little remains to encourage the parson in a life which has always had more than its usual share of disappointment, except his faith and his sense of sacred duties conscientiously performed. It may be that the result will be to purify and elevate the character of the country clergy. If so, the refining process will ultimately raise their position and extend their influence; but, meanwhile, the furnace is exceeding hot.

A JAPANESE VOLCANO.—The active volcano, Asamayama, appears to be attracting particular attention just now in Japan, probably because it is the loftiest mountain in the country which is in a constant state of activity, and also because it is the nearest to the capital, and is situated in a district long famous for its health resorts. A few weeks since we referred to an anonymous account of the crater, published in the *Japan Weekly Mail*, but a much more careful sketch of it is given by the Japan correspondent of the *Times* in a letter published recently in that journal. The roar of the volcano, on approaching the edge of the crater, he describes as not unlike the noise produced by the passage of a train across a bridge under which one is standing. There was no shaking, however, but loud hissing and bubbling constantly proceeded from numberless vapor-jets in the inner face of the crater-wall, from its rim downwards. The crater is a rough oval in shape, but the estimates of its size are most conflicting. The Japanese give the circumference as four miles, but this is simply a wild guess. A German explorer set down the diameter at eleven hundred yards, and an English mathematical professor put it at only two hundred yards, "divergencies that will illustrate the mental confusion to which some men are liable when in the presence of dread natural phenomena." The writer himself estimated the circumference at one thousand and fifty-six yards, by walking round the

windward half of it—it was impossible to pass through the vapors on the lee side—which was accomplished in six minutes, at the rate of about three miles an hour. On the very interesting question of the depth of the crater—that is, the depth from the mouth to the surface of the molten matter—opinions vary almost as hopelessly as on the size. No doubt the "vast clouds of the most pungent sulphurous steam," which are described as rising swiftly out of the caldron, render exact observation difficult. The *Times* correspondent speaks of catching glimpses of the crater-wall at depths which a very moderate estimate would place at three hundred feet. But the gradual convergence of the cavity apparent at this depth forbids the acceptance of the enormous profundity for which some visitors have contended, and suggests that the depth can hardly much exceed five hundred feet. After a weird description of the appearance presented to the spectator by the volcano at work, the writer concludes by remarking that the present crater is apparently the youngest and innermost of three. Further down on the south-west side are to be seen, along with numerous fissures of unfathomable depth, remains which point to the existence of two former craters, concentric and of large dimensions, and separated from one another by a considerable interval. Possibly the existing cone was formed by the great eruption of 1783.

Nature.







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